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LOCAL WOMAN IS SPARED JAIL AFTER ATTEMPTING TO SMUGGLE DRUGS

A WOMAN who smuggled drugs into Parc Prison, Bridgend, has been spared an immediate jail sentence at Cardiff Crown Court.

Lynne Parsons (58), who appeared in the dock on crutches, was said to have been acting under duress and to be coping with many health problems, which forced her to use a wheelchair.

Parsons, a woman with no previous convictions,

REPORT by AJ SICLUNA

tions, of Nantyllyfyllon, Maesteg, admitted taking a prohibited substance into the prison.

She was jailed for nine months, the sentence suspended for a year, and made subject to a supervision order for the same period.

She was also ordered to observe a three-month curfew, electronically tagged from 5pm to 8am, and to pay a victim surcharge of £100.

Prosecutor Jonathan

Bushell said that on September 12, Parsons visited an inmate at the prison and staff immediately became suspicious when she was seen putting something into her mouth and kissing the prisoner.

She was arrested and when searched, more than 50 Class C drugs, were found concealed in her private parts.

She later told the police she had been forced to take the drugs into the prison.

Her barrister, Kevin Seal, said: "There had been serious threats to her wellbeing."

Currently, said Mr Seal, her 18-year-old son is her constant carer, but there will be a time later this year when he is going to be at university.

"If she loses her liberty, she will lose her accommodation - a specially adapted property."

He said she accepted she had to be punished,

but on the facts, it was an exceptional case.

Recorder Peter Griffiths told Parsons: "What you did, taking drugs into prison, is a very serious offence."

"Prisons are beset with drugs problems, and anyone who takes drugs in is normally sentenced with a degree of severity, because such conduct has to be deterred."

He said he took into account to a degree that she had been coerced.

The Recorder said he had explored the matter in some detail and it appears she had refused to take the drugs in on more than one occasion, but put under pressure, she acted under duress.

No doubt, said the Recorder, she suffered a great deal of ill health.

"If you lost your liberty, your special accommodation would go."

The Recorder added that the case had represented for him a difficult balancing exercise.

Kenfig Hill players have a close shave for Glaze charity!



A GROUP from Kenfig Hill RFC have shaved off their hair - in aid of the Glaze Prostate Cymru charity.

GLAZE has helped fund the centre of excellence for Green Light Laser treatment at the Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend, which is now an eminent teaching unit, headed by consultant Andy Thomas.

GLAZE raises funds for the treatment centre. Six players had their hair shaven and two volunteered to be waxed,

with help from Ray Giles, former Wales and Aberavon scrum half, and Andy Thomas.

The eight who took part in the event were Chris Leyshon, Kyle Davies, Ben Jones, Stephen Maysmith, Michael Guy, Jamie Uren, Karl Davies and Gavin Reffell.

The event raised money for the six players who will be climbing Kilimanjaro in October this year, hoping to raise up to £20,000 for the charity.

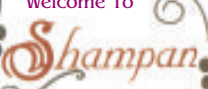
They have already raised £3,500 and are looking for sponsors in the community to help reach the target.

For more information, contact Kenfig Hill RFC or www.prostatecymru.com. Any donations would be welcome. To donate, visit www.justgiving.com/prostatecymruglaze/2014.

ABOVE: First row: Jamie Uren, Chris Leyshon and Gavin Reffell. Back row: Ben Jones, Kyle Davies, Stephen Maysmith, Karl Davies, Michael Guy, Andy Thomas and Raymond Giles.

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Historic discovery in small Laleston church

A MEDIEVAL tombstone has been found in St David's Church, Laleston.

Surprisingly, the historic artefact had been hidden under a carpet!

(SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 3).

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We will (in certain circumstances) protect a writer's identity, if requested. Please keep your letters **BRIEF** and address them to: The Editor, **DON JOHN**, at Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7E OR email gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

BCBC's 'PLAN A' FOR PORTHCAWL 'HAS LITTLE CHANCE OF SUCCESS'

ON behalf of the Porthcawl Civic Trust Society, I would like to congratulate Bridgend County Borough Council on the improvements made to the Porthcawl harbour.

Hopefully, with the surrounding area landscaped, improvements made to the Jennings warehouse, and a new marine centre started in 2015, this part of the town will become a major attraction and source of pleasure for residents and visitors alike.

That's where the good news ends, however. Like a mounting number of Porthcawl residents, the society is becoming increasingly concerned about BCBC's plans for the regeneration of the town.

The society has already documented its objection to the proposed changes in the road network (cost £5.7m). Together with the additional amounts required to obtain the land currently leased by, or under the ownership of the Evans families, and the amount required to repay money borrowed for the work carried out on the harbour, the total cost could be as much as £11m plus.

With Tesco, Waitrose and now Morrisons having declined the opportunity to build a superstore in Porthcawl, the chances of BCBC's Plan A coming to fruition seem very remote.

As well as our general concerns about BCBC's proposed regeneration of the town, the society is strongly opposed to the plans to build houses and

flats (up to six storeys high) on Salt Lake car park.

Having sought the opinions of both members and non-members of the society, there is no doubt that a large majority of Porthcawl's residents are also opposed to this development.

This is a prime piece of land and, as befits a sea-side resort, it is widely felt that the area should be landscaped and designated for leisure use. The society has already written to BCBC expressing this view.

Currently, BCBC appears to be basing its assumptions of Porthcawl residents' support for the regeneration plans on a consultation exercise carried out as long ago as 2007 when about 400 people attended a town meeting and, of these, only 180 completed a questionnaire, which was composed by BCBC and was vague in its aims and objectives.

This is a flimsy basis on which to plan Porthcawl's future. The society considers it to be essential that residents should be given a further, more meaningful opportunity to express their hopes and aspirations for the town.

If your readers agree with the line taken by the Porthcawl Civic Trust Society, I would ask them to contact their BCBC councillor and let him or her know how they feel. Alternatively, please email the society at: porthcawlcivictrust@hotmail.co.uk. **Anthony Hontoir** (Chairman, Porthcawl Civic Trust Society)

Council mergers: 'Bridgend more important than Cardiff'

THE proposal by the Williams Commission that the Vale of Glamorgan Council should merge with that of Cardiff City Council, is only the latest manifestation of a 'drip-fed' campaign that has been ongoing for several years.

Regular press and other media releases have regularly emphasised the advantages that such a merger would bring to the Vale, but the reason for these proposals runs much deeper than would first appear.

It is not just about the expansion of Cardiff's geographical boundaries, but also inevitable governmental control over virtually the whole of south east Wales that would be vested in Cardiff City Council.

If one looks at the history of the development of the settlement of Cardiff from Roman times, through the medieval period and on to its enormous growth over the 200 years of the Industrial Revolution, it has always been dependent on the agricultural and mineral resources of its neighbours.

The sole reason for Cardiff's past importance, either militarily or industrially, has been its strategic location and, principally, its access to the sea.

This is an advantage that no longer prevails, with the result that today the city has become nothing more than a recreational, leisure and residential complex, which successive planning departments have seen fit to endorse with their approval.

This aspect of city life is much loved by a modern generation of youth, and I see no objection to that, but it hardly justifies any claim that its authority should be extended beyond its present boundaries.

Industrially, Bridgend is far greater importance than Cardiff, and has just as easy an access to the vital artery of the M4.

So while Cardiff postures as a vibrant modern city, it could also be seen as a city in danger of serious decline, a situation of which its council is well aware.

It no longer has any 'Raison d'Etre' and that is why it would gladly accept any recommendations like those of the Williams Commission's.

Thus it will desperately continue to seek to

widen its sphere of influence in the south of the principality. To adapt a Biblical quotation – Cardiff 'toils not but it does a great deal of spinning'.

Cardiff's neighbours would do well to unite in a joint effort to curb the city's ambitions, but the parochial nature of Welsh politics would probably not easily adopt such a coalition.

In the end, it will be the responsibility of each member of the electorate to ensure their chosen candidates in the local and general elections are wholly committed to maintaining the independence of the constituency or borough they represent.

Sadly, the final decision on this issue may finally be taken out of our hands by the Welsh Assembly which is based in the capital.

Cardiff has everything to gain from a merger with the Vale, while the Vale would lose everything including its identity.

Jim Morgan, Llantwit Major

Remembering the days of rationing

AT the January meeting of the Porthcawl Parkinson's Support Group, Mrs Ceri Roberts gave us a talk on 'Rationing' and told us how in 1936, Government officials were talking about food rationing.

It wasn't until 1940, during the war, that rationing actually happened. At first, food was rationed, with three rashes of bacon, two ounces of butter and eight ounces of sugar per person, per week.

Later, as the war bit into the economy, things like clothes and furniture became rationed. At the time, many of our group were children, taking it all in our stride, we never went hungry our mothers were good at their jobs and provided for us.

The only thing that really hit us was when sweets went onto this ever-increasing list. We could not believe it, and it was not until 1952 that with some relief, sweet rationing ceased.

After Ceri had finished her talk, we all had many memories of rationing to recollect and stories to tell. Our next meeting is Friday, February 28 at the Unitarian chapel schoolroom, Nottage. For further information contact 01656 783071.

Appeal as film recalls miners' strike 'injustice'

A group of emerging film makers is commemorating the 30th anniversary of the miners' strike with their graduation film, *The Coal Miners*, and is calling for the Welsh public's support.

The *Coal Miners* is set in Merthyr Tydfil, during the miners' strike of 1984-1985. When the British Government decided to close down around 20 pits all around the UK, mining communities started strikes that lasted for 12 months.

The *Coal Miners* is the story of one of these communities, focusing on a group of people unable to control their own lives or to choose their own future – because of the political and economical situation that was imposed on them.

The producer, Calum Green, from Bridgend, said: "We believe that this kind of injustice has to be told, to show how its effect still resonates today."

The film is well into the production process, with initial filming having already taken place

in both Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenavon. The crew is currently casting for the film in and around the Cardiff area, working with actors who went through the strikes, in order to do justice to the people and communities of the time.

On completion, the film will premiere at the British Film Institute in London before being entered into national and international film festivals. In doing so, the producers hope to help commemorate the 30th anniversary of the mining strikes.

At present, the crew is in the process of raising money for their ambitious project, which begins filming in March: "We are currently looking for public support to help keep the mining strikes in the public conscious," added Calum.

• The closing date for donations to the project is this Friday, February 14. To donate or find out more visit: <http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/the-coal-miners/>.

...And BCBC said: 'Let there be light!'

AROUND a third of the street lights in Bridgend county borough will be replaced by more energy efficient ones during the next three years, cabinet members from Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) have agreed.

A total of 6,000 modern LED light units will be installed, which provide the same amount of light, but use between 30 and 60 per cent less energy.

The new type of LED lanterns that BCBC is planning on installing will give off a white light, which will be different from the orange light that is common throughout south Wales.

Shedding further light on the new technology, Coun Phil White, BCBC cabinet member for communities said: "In addition to being more energy efficient, I understand that the new lights will

make local roads safer for drivers and pedestrians as they are generally more directional, so they can light roads better and won't cast so much light where it isn't needed.

"Another advantage of this new type of light is that we will have the capability to dim them at pre-set times, which will result in further energy savings."

Coun White added: "The LED lights that we are looking at would come with a 20-year guarantee, so would also be relatively maintenance free."

There are a total of 20,000 street lights in Bridgend county borough, and the 6,000 new ones will replace the older concrete columns and less energy efficient lights that are currently scattered across the area.

Following the cabinet's decision, the council will now carry out a tender exercise to appoint a supplier to provide 6,000 LED street lanterns over a period of up to three years.

Local MP supports charity's fuel poverty campaign



Madeleine Moon MP displays 'Step One'.

BRIDGEND MP Madeleine Moon has pledged her support for 'Mind the Gap', a campaign aiming to raise awareness of help available for people affected by fuel poverty.

The campaign, run by the national charity Turn2us, focuses on the growing gap between household incomes and the cost of energy bills, and highlights the support available to those struggling to pay their energy costs.

The campaign features six steps, using Turn2us' free tools and information to help anyone experiencing these problems. The steps, available at www.turn2us.org.uk/fuelpoverty include checking welfare benefits entitlement, searching for grants and schemes to help with bills, getting help to improve energy efficiency and checking energy tariffs.

Research by the charity found that a staggering 85 per cent of people across Wales are worried about paying their energy bills this winter. Of those who struggled with these costs last winter, almost two-thirds (64 per cent) suffered stress as a result and over a third (36 per cent) were forced to cut back on food or skip meals.

The MP said: "Fuel poverty is an extremely important issue that can have a hugely damaging effect on people from all backgrounds. It's vitally important that people realise that they do not have to struggle alone and that help is available to help manage energy bills."

"I'm pleased to be able to support Turn2us' 'Mind the Gap' fuel poverty campaign and I encourage anyone who is worried to take action and use the six steps to manage their bills."

Alison Taylor, Director of Turn2us said: "Turn2us has launched its winter fuel poverty campaign with the news that more people are worried about finding the money to pay for their energy bills. With the cost of living steadily increasing, people feel like they have no option but to borrow money and cut back on essentials to cover costs. Our research shows that more needs to be done to help raise awareness of the financial support and help available to manage energy bills."

'Mind the Gap' runs until February 15. Visit www.turn2us.org.uk/fuelpoverty.

HIGH TIDE TIMES (UNTIL FEBRUARY 20)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
13 Thur	05.35	8.9	17.54	8.9
14 Fri	06.11	9.2	18.31	9.2
15 Sat	06.43	9.4	19.04	9.5
16 Sun	07.17	9.6	19.33	9.6
17 Mon	07.47	9.7	20.05	9.5
18 Tues	08.18	9.6	20.37	9.4
19 Wed	08.51	9.5	21.09	9.4
20 Thur	09.24	9.3	21.44	9.1

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should check with a tide table specific to their location.

Viv recognised for her dental work with local children



ABOVE:
Vivienne as Cruella de Vil.

A local woman was nominated for the award of Britain's Best Dental Hygienist.

Although Vivienne Steward of Pencoed, Bridgend, did not win the title she was one of a handful of dental hygienists to be recognised across the country for exceptional work, and attend the awards ceremony in London.

Mrs Steward of Talbot Road Dental Practice was nominated by her peers for the award.

She has spent time going into schools to talk about dental health, and even dresses up as a toothbrush and Cruella de Vil to entertain children.

The awards have going for more than five years.

Vivienne said: "It was an honour to have been nominated for the award."

"Not everyone likes the dentist so I like making people feel comfortable and happy to come in. Getting dressed up to talk to children about the importance of dental hygiene makes it more fun and keeps them interested."

There were only 20 finalists.

Janette Harrison, a dentist at Talbot Road, said: "We're so proud that Viv was shortlisted for the award."

"She's been a member of the practice team for nine years now, and it's great to see that all her hard work and dedication has been recognised."

History was swept under the carpet in Laleston!



ABOVE:

Rev Canon Edward Evans with framed photograph of medieval tombstone.

A MEDIEVAL tombstone has been unearthed hidden under a carpet in a small church in Bridgend county borough.

The rare stone was found at St David's Church, Laleston, while research work was being carried out to set up an historical interactive walking trail in the area.

It is set in the floor of the chancel in the village church and is one of three unique 'triple cross' slabs found in Glamorgan which historians believe may be linked.

The stone set in the floor at St David's is believed to date to the late 14th to early 15th century. In order to protect it, it will be covered up again shortly but a professional photograph and information about it will be mounted on the wall nearby.

Rev Canon Edward Evans said: "The problem was that if we covered it up again then nobody would get to see it but if we left it exposed where it was, then its condition would deteriorate so that's why we came up with the solution of the photograph."

"It's a puzzle as to why there is no mention of this stone in the church history that was written in the 1950s – it appears that it had been forgotten about."

It will now form one of the focal points of interest on the 'Laleston Stone Trail', which is being developed with funding from Laleston Community Council and is in the early planning stage.

All three triple cross slabs, which were recorded by historians at the turn of the century, centre around the monks of Margam, with one found in the ruins of the monastic church and the third in the churchyard at Llangynwyd. The monks of Margam held the rectory of Llangynwyd, while the church at Llangynwyd was an important focus of regional pilgrimage to its famous holy rood.

All three triple cross slabs have the thieves on them as well as Christ – which is likely to be a reflection of the design of the rood screen at Llangynwyd.

The route which pilgrims would have taken from Margam to Llangynwyd would have been along a medieval trackway, which passes Laleston.

The planned Laleston Stone Trail is to be based around a section of this medieval trackway. It will form a loop off the Wales Coast Path and will pass by heritage sites including locations where Celtic crosses or carvings have been found – and will include the triple cross tombstone at Laleston Church.

Dr Madeleine Gray, Reader in Church History at the University of South Wales, Newport said: "A stone like this would have been set in the floor of the church and usually had a person buried underneath – probably somebody quite important."

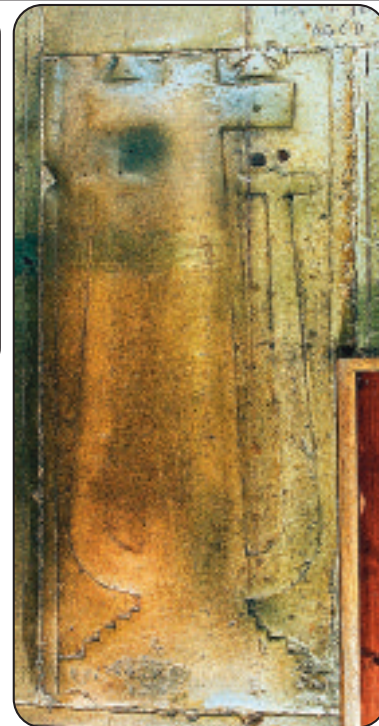
"I think that it's likely that this stone has always been in this church and possibly in the chancel, but might have been taken up and then re-laid at a later date – this is indicated by signs that it has been chopped off at both the top and the bottom."

"It is a significant find, as its rediscovery offers

War memorial barcode plaque

BRIDGEND Town Council in conjunction with 'History Points', has commissioned the placing of a QR Barcode plaque on the railings of the Bridgend Town Centre War Memorial.

The QR Barcode enables passers-by with a smartphone or tablet to scan the code which links to the 'History Points' web-site, allowing them to read the names on the memorial and also the regiment, rank, date of death, age, burial place, address, next of kin etc.



Medieval tombstone close up by Photosolutions, Maesteg.

an amazing insight into the spiritual world of late medieval people. It enables us to explore this world of pilgrimage to the rood of Llangynwyd.

"It also puts a different slant on late medieval religion. Some historians have thought medieval religion was dominated by fear and guilt. The triple cross signifies the thieves as well as Christ and indicates a reassurance that whatever you had done, you could always be saved."

"It connects the world of pilgrimage and offers us a different insight into the medieval approach to death."

Anti-bullying programme moves to primary schools

A PROGRAMME that has been successful in helping to tackle bullying and conflict in secondary schools across Bridgend county borough, is now being introduced in primary schools.

BCBC's 'restorative approaches' programme has involved teenagers being trained as mediators so that they can work with fellow students and teachers to tackle issues linked to bullying.

It has been carried out at a number of local secondary schools over the last five years, with youngsters using their mediator skills to help their peers in the same year group as well as younger pupils.

Explaining the programme, restorative approaches officer Zenda Caravaggi said: "The 'restorative approaches' process uses mediation as a tool to resolve any kind of conflict within a school. This can be between pupils, or between pupils and staff."

"In cases of suspected bullying, all parties involved are brought together so that a sincere apology can be made before a number of issues are discussed such as how it made them feel and why it happened. The overall aim of the process is to address the harm that has been done and prevent it from happening again."

The approach has helped to reduce bullying and resolve conflicts in a number of schools, and a 'peer mediation' DVD produced by Bridgend County Borough Council has been requested by professionals working in restorative justice around the world.

The next step is to introduce some of the successful formulae to younger pupils in local primary schools, with eight year-6 pupils from Garth Primary School being the first to be visited in the next month.

The programme will be tailored for primary school pupils, although its principles will remain the same, and Zenda added: "This will lead to a clear consistent approach with regard to training peer mediators from primary to comprehensive education. The skills that the pupils learn throughout the training, and later in facilitating mediation disputes, are ones that are transferable and can only be of benefit to their future plans, dreams and aspirations."

Coun Huw David, cabinet member for children and young people, said: "Anything that helps to

reduce bullying and anti-social behaviour in schools has to be commended.

"I am delighted that this successful programme is being extended further across the county borough so that other children can listen to their peers and help resolve their problems."

Community services make stand against domestic abuse



PC Paul Thomas, Flying Start team manager Tina Haddon and BCBC leader Mel Nott at the domestic abuse awareness event.

ORGANISATIONS who provide services for the local community in Caerau have come together for a training event – to gain a greater understanding of the issues surrounding domestic abuse.

Hosted by BCBC and South Wales Police, the event saw Flying Start staff, teachers, GPs, childcare workers, police and other professionals gather to discuss how the support and practical solutions available for victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse can be improved locally.

The council's Flying Start team manager, Tina Haddon, who organised the event, said: "The

programme works with families to give children an excellent start to their young lives, but unfortunately, domestic abuse is an issue that is experienced by families in many of our communities."

"Therefore, we wanted to gain a greater insight into this complex and difficult issue so that we can cultivate a joined-up approach with other organisations to support local communities even more effectively."

"The training was delivered by PC Paul Thomas from South Wales Police and was extremely well received. Our plan is to now deliver this type of training in all Flying Start communities in Bridgend County Borough."

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Assembly minister officially opens the relocated library

MINISTER for Culture and Sport John Griffiths AM has officially opened the newly relocated Bridgend Library.

A Bridgend County Borough Council spokesman said: "The event capped a memorable opening period for the library, which has seen visitor figures flourish since relocating from its former Wyndham Street location last November."

The Oldcastle Primary school choir provided a musical welcome for guests as the Minister toured the new premises and saw how members of a reading group are making the most of the facilities.

Now located at Bridgend Recreation Centre, the library has a range of new facilities, including state-of-the-art self-service machines, thousands of new books, enhanced ICT equipment, including computers and tablet devices, new furniture, reading corners and a children's area.

The library move was



ABOVE: John Griffiths AM officially opened the new Bridgend Library.

supported by a £200,000 Community Learning Libraries capital grant from the Welsh Government and forms part of the wider multi-million pound improvement works taking place at Bridgend Recreation Centre, which is being implemented through the council's partnership with Halo Leisure.

Mr Griffiths said: "Investing in the future of our young people to

give them the best possible start in life is extremely important, so I am particularly pleased at the increase of usage of the brand new library by children.

"This new facility is an innovative and more sustainable model of high quality public service delivery and provides a wonderful destination for the whole family."

Coun Lyn Morgan, cabinet member for wellbeing, said: "When we first announced proposals for moving the town library from its traditional location on Wyndham Street, some understandable concerns were expressed. However, the new library has been exceptionally popular since first opening.

"Over 17,000 visits were recorded and more than 12,000 library resources were borrowed from the library within the first month. It is currently on target for recording a 33 per cent increase in visitor numbers over the course of a year, and a 39 per cent increase in the number of items borrowed."

Young actor's film trailer for next musical show

YOUNG actors of Bridgend Youth Theatre, which is run by It's My Shout Productions, had the chance to film their own promotional trailer last week for their upcoming production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's gothic masterpiece The Phantom of the Opera.

Far beneath the majesty and splendour of the Paris Opera House, the Phantom lives a shadowy existence.

Shamed by his physical appearance and feared by all, the tortured genius fatally falls in love with the young soprano Christine Daaé, with disastrous consequences.

Cast members Joe Wiltshire Smith, Rebecca Leigh, Jack Ayres and Meredith Lewis came together in Porthcawl Grand



Rebecca Leigh plays Christine.

Pavilion with camera, makeup and costume trainees to create their own trailer for the youth theatre's production.

The show will be performed in Porthcawl Grand Pavilion, on Friday, February 28 and Saturday, March 1 with performances at 2.30pm and 7.30pm on both days. Contact the Box Office on 01656 815995.

To see the BYT's trailer, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gtyTdi-paS0>

Mental health champion for Bridgend county borough is appointed

A NEW advocate to promote mental health issues has been appointed for Bridgend county borough.

BCBC's cabinet has appointed Deputy Leader, Coun David Sage, as the council's Mental Health Champion, to supplement efforts being made by the authority to address mental health issues within the council and throughout the county borough.

It has created the role to "highlight and tackle the stigma and discrimination often faced by people experiencing mental health issues", and to improve links

between the council, other mental health services, local employers, schools, colleges and the wider community to boost the multi-agency support provided.

Coun Sage said: "One in four people will experience poor mental health during their life, which shows just how pertinent an issue it is.

"People's attitudes towards mental health are generally improving but, while it has become less of a taboo, it's paramount that everyone keeps working to become more understanding and supportive towards residents with these issues.

"In recent years, a more collaborative

approach has been taken to delivering mental health support and services, and continuing to build on this work forms a key objective in the council's strategic equalities plan.

"It's important that we further develop these relationships with our partners to ensure that appropriate support is available for people with mental health issues."

If you, or someone you know needs support, contact Bridgend's Integrated Referral Management Centre on 01656 642279, or approach your GP to access the local Primary Mental Health Service.

NORTH BRIDGEND NEWS

A message for all readers in the north of Bridgend who would like to have items included in the community news columns of

The GEM:

If you wish to submit reports on any social activity in this region, please contact me.

I am very approachable and will endeavour to include every newsworthy subject.

Contact details: CLIVE MITCHELL

1 Tyn-Y-Coed Close, Sarn, Bridgend CF32 9NQ

TEL: 01656 725399

email: tynycoed1@yahoo.co.uk



Charity fund

I WOULD like to thank Ross for this information. An unusual event was recently held to help raise money for the Mayor of Maesteg's charity fund.

It was titled 'Maesteg does India', held at the Montaj Indian restaurant, and the evening was a big success, raising over £300 towards the fund.

The organisers would like to thank Jay and his staff for providing such a sumptuous buffet which helped make the evening such a success.

The next fundraising event, to include in the Mayor's charity donations calendar will be on Friday, February 28 at 7pm in the Working Men's Club, Temple Street, Maesteg.

It will be a form of Welsh dancing night titled 'Twmpath'. All money raised will be shared between Maesteg Day Hospital and Maesteg 3rd Scouts group.

Cost of entry will be £5 plus £2 if you would like chicken and chips. Tickets can be obtained by telephoning 01656 735988.

Tondu Primary School MRS Susan Pilcher, the headteacher, invites parents and carers of pupils in Miss Davies' class (Doshbar) Llynfi to share in the children's class assembly on Friday, February 14 at 10.20am.

Afterwards, everyone is welcome to join the staff and their friends for tea or coffee and a chat.

The school will be holding a session on Wednesday mornings from 9.45am to 11.45am in the Heol Persondy building in Aberkenfig.

It is titled 'Tondu Toddlers' and children will be able to meet others in the same age group and learn how to socialise with peers, while the parents meet for a chat.

The school will be holding parents' evenings on Tuesday/Wednesday evenings; Susan hopes that everyone will make an effort to attend as it gives parents or carers an opportunity to discuss their children's progress with class teachers.

Children in Years 1 and 2 recently went to Park Slip Nature Park and thoroughly enjoyed the activities they took part in.

They visited the bird hide and were told about the types of bird they could see from their hiding place. The children took notes as part of the National Birdwatch exercise.

Choir concert

BOIS Goytre-Hen male choir is holding a St David's Day concert in the Aberkenfig Bible Church, Pandy Road on Saturday March 1, at 7pm.

Conducting the choir will be Dale Aubrey Evans, department head of music and performing arts in Tredegar Comprehensive School. He has been musical director of several London shows in the Wimbledon and Bloomsbury theatres.

Accompanist for the evening is Bethan Edwards, an accomplished pianist, and soloist is Rhidian Jenkins, winner of many Urdd and Welsh National Eisteddfod competitions.

I have followed Rhidian's progress since he was 11 years old when he starred in the Bridgend young singer competition at Maesteg town hall.

He is certainly a musical star in the making. I have seen ladies with eyes streaming as he sang his version in Welsh of the lovely song 'Bring him home'.

Tickets cost £7 each and include interval refreshments; they're available from any choir member or by calling 07976 420161.

School's success

COLEG Cymunedol Y Dderwen, the new comprehensive school in Ynysawdre, consists of six separate colleges - namely Amethyst, Emerald, Ruby, Sapphire, Sunstone and Topaz.

Mr Andrew Warren, the headteacher, has supplied information on some outstanding members of Sunstone college.

Shannon Lloyd, a sports fanatic, has represented the cup-winning Port Talbot girls football academy. She is also a Welsh and British table tennis champion.

Scott Thornton is an upcoming cricketer who has played for the Wales under-15s and under-17s teams. He has also played for the West of England team in the Bunbury Festival.

Courtney Taylor is a keen dancer and at the Swansea Festival took part in ballet and modern dancing competitions in which she had the distinction of winning three golds, one silver and two bronze medals.

Rehearsal time

OGMORE Vale Male Voice Choir is busy rehearsing a new repertoire for its St David's Day concert - another way of expressing thanks to its lady supporters.

Titled 'Cawl a Chan', members of the audience are provided with a bowl of cawl, Welsh cakes and Bara Brith included in the cost of entry.

This is a great concert, everything is so relaxed and the audience is encouraged to participate in the entertainment.

As a thank you to the choir's lady supporters, the choristers help prepare the food and act as waiters at the tables.

The choir rehearses in its Canolfan Bethlehem Centre, Commercial Street, Ogmere Vale on Thursday evenings and will welcome visitors and new members. For further information, telephone John on 01656 841429.

Children's choir

MAESTEG Children's Choir is looking to recruit new members as they prepare for their 28th annual concert, which will be performed at Maesteg Town Hall in June.

This is an opportunity for youngsters from the Bridgend area keen to perform in musical theatre.

The choir rehearses every Saturday morning from 10am to 12noon at Plasnewydd Primary School, Castle Street, Maesteg (and it only costs £2 a week).

The musical director is Enid-Sian Hughes, who reports that the choir is looking for girls and boys who enjoy singing and making new friends, preferably aged from 8 to 16 years, to help keep the musical tradition in the Bridgend area alive.

School IT

COLEG Cymunedol Y Dderwen, Ynysawdre, will soon become the first secondary school in Wales to provide an iPad for all pupils, taking technology in the classroom to new levels.

Every student in years 9 to 13 is already benefiting from having their own individual iPad mini, while the younger children in years 7 and 8 will also be equipped with the modern learning tool.

The £34m comprehensive school opened in September. Headteacher Andrew Warren believes that even though the college is in its early days, the use of iPads at the school is gathering momentum and the pupils have not only more engagement with learning, but also deeper learning.

Ramp up the Red to fight heart disease - MP URGES



Madeleine Moon MP with the British Heart Foundation.

THE MP for Bridgend, Madeleine Moon, supported the British Heart Foundation's first ever pop-up shop in the Palace of Westminster.

She met shop staff and volunteers to hear how BHF shops raise vital funds for life-saving research and urged people to 'Ramp up the Red' this month.

On February 7 the BHF asked the public to wear something red, host a red themed party or bake some red-coloured treats!

"By popping up in Parliament, the BHF has reminded us of the vital role their shops play in raising funds for life-saving research. I was especially pleased to be told that the Bridgend shop, in partnership with Bridgend College, is leading the way in ensuring its staff hold NVQs in retail, to demonstrate their professionalism in providing a quality customer experience."

Coronary heart disease is the UK's single biggest killer, responsible for almost 74,000 deaths in the UK each year, an average of 200 people each day. There are currently 2.3 million people in the UK living with coronary heart disease.

For more information about Ramp up the Red or to donate, visit www.bhf.org.uk/red.

Brynteg scoops Rotary Youth Speaks title



The Brynteg Rotary Youth Speaks winners.

THE Rotary Youth Speaks area final was held at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg on January 21, when the winners of the intermediate area final were from Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwydd.

Members of the team were Elinor Cornish, Ioan Lloyd and Aaleah Knill and their chosen topic was 'The Inspirational Figure of Nelson Mandela'.

Three teams competed in the senior area final of the public speaking competition: Brynteg Comprehensive School debated the idea that 'The Driving Age Should Not Be Increased to 18 Years of Age.'

Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg, Llangynwydd, presented an interesting argument explaining 'Why Social

Networking Sites and Teenagers Don't Mix.'

Ysgol Maesdydderwen proposed the idea that 'Booze Britain Needs To Take Responsibility For Its Actions.'

It was a very exciting evening and the speakers did not fail to entertain family, friends, teachers and Rotarians, who turned up to support them on the evening.

It was a very difficult task for the adjudicators, but Brynteg Comprehensive School were declared the winners of the competition!

Thomas Prosser was the chairperson for the evening, Samuel Griffiths was the speaker and Rebekah Lee offered the vote of thanks.

They will now go forward to the Rotary District 1150 finals, to be held in the Millennium Centre on March 7. We wish them every success!

Teachers are confirmed in front of pupils at Bridgend school

TEACHERS at a church school became pupils once again while being prepared for confirmation recently.

Emma Bowen, and her colleague Matthew Owens, (both 31) who teach at Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School in Bridgend, were confirmed in front of their own pupils, along with family, during a special service held at the school.

Both Emma and Matthew particularly wanted the service to be held during the school day and in school so that their pupils could attend. "Because this is a church school, faith is a big part of school life and I just wanted to be the best role model that I could be, both as a teacher and a parent," said Emma, who teaches years two – three, and is married with two children.

"We worship together in school daily and once a week I lead my own classroom worship. Matthew and I asked if we could be confirmed in front of our pupils, as we want to set the best example that we could to them.

"Preparing for confirmation has strengthened my faith, and I hope that

it helps to enable me to be the best person that I can be."

Following Emma and Matthew's confirmation, a group of pupils who had been prepared by the parish clergy for Communion, received the sacrament for the first time during the same service, which was led by the Assistant Bishop of Llandaff, David Wilbourne.

Matthew's decision to be confirmed was also prompted by a desire to set a good example both for his pupils and for his own family.

"I have recently become a father and I wanted to be both a good role model at home, as well as in school," said Matthew, who teaches years three – four.

"But as I learnt more about faith during the confirmation classes, I learnt that it's a lot about love and that God put man on earth so that he would have someone else to love.

"As the more in-depth my understanding of Christianity became, the more the morals and values, particularly about love, struck home to me.

"The more that I read the Bible, the more questions that I had to ask and I really enjoyed developing my knowledge. It is something



Teachers Matthew and Emma, with pupils Ben Gonzales, Eden Holt, Leya Townsend and Manon Godin, (left to right) and the Bishop.

that I am continuing with and that has become more personal for me.

"By holding our confirmation service in front of our pupils it is reinforcing the message that this is something that is not just part of the curriculum – and not just something that your parents and teachers decide."

Rev Mike Komor, Rector of Coity, Nolton and Brackla, who prepared Emma and Matthew for confirmation, said: "I was delighted when Emma and Matthew approached me about being confirmed –

although they attended school worship, something had prompted them to take the next step."

The Assistant Bishop of Llandaff, David Wilbourne, said: "Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales School in Brackla, as well as being an outstanding primary school, serves as one of the three worship centres in the parish of Coity, Nolton and Brackla, with regular services held there on a Sunday and during Christmas festivals.

"I have visited there several times to lead worship, but, since two teachers at the school

had been prepared for confirmation, we thought it would be good to hold a confirmation service during the school day, so all the pupils, staff and parents could witness the confirmation and take part in the celebration.

"Obviously, I used each teacher's Christian name when I confirmed them – I guess the biggest shock for the children was that their teachers had a Christian name!

"But the two teachers who were confirmed are clearly fantastic people, so it was the greatest of days."

Alison Young

The question is, what is your perfect day out?

WHETHER it be a walk on the beach, an afternoon in the countryside, or a visit to a favourite attraction, BCBC has teamed up with the Bridgend Tourism Association to encourage people to share their idea of a 'Perfect Day' out.

Videos have been produced which feature people describing their favourite places and activities they enjoy most in Bridgend county borough, and the campaign aims to get even more joining in.

Coun David Sage, cabinet member for tourism, explained: "People are often quick to talk down their local area, but here in Bridgend county borough we have a fantastic coastline, countryside and rich history that we can be rightly proud of.

"The Perfect Day campaign is a fun way of celebrating what we have on offer, and we would like as many residents as possible to post their own ideas online and help spread the message far and wide that Bridgend county borough is a wonderful place to visit during all seasons."

One of the videos on www.bridgendbites.com/perfect-day shows Porthcawl surfer Hugh Murray enjoying an action-packed day. Hugh said: "I still don't understand why more surfers aren't flocking to Porthcawl to ride the waves at Rest Bay.

"I've been coming here for years now and the waves are easily as big and as frequent as you'd find in west Wales or Cornwall. I love the fact that I can just come down here with my friends, zip up my wetsuit and get right out into the sea for a good few hours."

Another video features Gareth Thomas and his girlfriend Ivonne Pereira-Thomas, who love taking their dog Nacho for walks near Merthyr Mawr.

Gareth, from Bridgend, said: "We love this part of the county borough, it's such a hidden gem and you quite often feel as if you've stumbled upon something completely undiscovered! We can sometimes carry on exploring the paths for hours.

"Eventually, the path leads onto sand as you reach the coast, which is where Nacho really gets excited! He bounds up over the dunes and before we know it we're scaling the mighty Big Dipper! It's sometimes hard work getting to the top but, once you do, you get to look out towards the coast, which is just stunning."

John is the star of the show over the Severn!

THE driving force behind an acclaimed panto *Dick Whittington and his Cat* in two Wiltshire villages near Marlborough is a Kenfig Hill man.

Under the outrageous eyelashes, the bloomers (fashioned by long-suffering wife Jacqueline, from last year's back bedroom curtains) and the gaudy wig is John Bartle.

Multi-talented John follows in a family tradition of strutting his stuff on the stage in a tradition that goes back to the Cefn Cribbwr pantomimes of yesteryear.

Not only does he provide all the biggest laughs on stage, but he writes the script for the annual extravaganza, arranges the music and writes original score and lyrics, oversees the lighting and sound and helps with the striking sets.

John explains: "I grew up in a family that made its own entertainment, my father, Gordon, played keyboards and accordion and entertained the crowds in Porthcawl and in Kenfig Hill just after the war.

"My Uncle Ray was a talented brass player and I followed the tradition with my own jazz ensemble which plays on the local circuit here in Wiltshire.

"We grew up watching Stan Stennett, Wyn Calvin and – a particular favourite – Ryan and Ronnie in their annual Swansea shows, and I was always keen to give it a go myself."

And give it a go, he does. The Saturday matinee was attended by daughter Rhian and grand-daughters Lily, Poppy and Eve who'd travelled over from Monmouth.

With younger daughter Laura helping out as Tommy the Cat, an audience packed with local children, mums and dads, uncles and aunts, grans and grandads had a wonderful time.

Family member, Stephen Townsend, from North Cornelly commented: "We howled with laughter all the way through, John and the cast were absolutely brilliant again this year.

"It's a top-class show, I don't know how they manage to pull it all together – live music, dancing, singing and some great one-liners. Well worth the journey over the Severn."

FREE LEGAL ADVICE FROM HUGH JAMES

Visit a FREE, no obligation, drop in session to discuss whether you are eligible for compensation



Katie McCraith will be in your local area to talk about:

- **Medical negligence** claims including missed fractures, birth injuries, cerebral palsy, mis-diagnosis and surgical complications.
- **Work place injuries** including factory, construction, agricultural, falling from height and fatal accidents.
- **Industrial illness** including asbestos exposure, crystalline silica exposure, mesothelioma, lung cancer, respiratory disease and deafness.

Katie will be at Bridgend County Borough Council, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB on the date listed below.

Wed 19 Feb

10am - 4.30pm

No appointment is necessary, we can also arrange free telephone consultations and home visits. Contact:

Katie McCraith

T: 0800 0938240

E: katie.mccraith@hughjames.com

W: www.hughjames.com/bridgend

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Nottage Primary pupils Isaak Cronjé, Jonathan Monro, Rohan Johns, Holly Barnfield and Ashleigh Phillips, find a less conventional way to use the school's ICT equipment!

Technology award number 2 for school

NOTTAGE Primary has received a prestigious ICT award for the second time.

The school was again awarded an ICT Mark accreditation, and praised for its "school-wide approach to making the most of technology".

Awarded by Naace, the accreditation recognises good use of technology to support teaching, learning and school administration, explained headteacher

Susan O'Halloran.

"On behalf of Nottage Primary School, I am delighted to be awarded the ICT Mark for the second time. It recognises our positive approach to the use of technology and the benefits it is bringing to our children.

"We believe that technology can be used in every aspect of learning and it is essential that our children are equipped for the modern world."

Coun Huw David, cabinet member for children and young people, said: "It's vital that our youngsters are adept at using technology, as it is playing an increasingly prevalent role in our lives.

"It's great that Nottage Primary has received this recognition for doing such a fantastic job of incorporating ICT into learning."

Coychurch WI set this year's plans in motion

THERE was an excellent attendance at the February meeting of Coychurch WI and president Sandra Davidson warmly welcomed everyone and wished both Wendy Hewitt and Ann Taylor happy birthdays.

The business of the evening included member Sue Elworthy becoming our representative at the International Women's Conference.

There was positive feedback regarding the January dinner in Porthcawl and options were put forward for the summer outing; a request for more support for the Scrabble afternoons and lunchtime soirees are to be arranged commencing from March.

Members were reminded about the theme for photo entries for the GFWI 2015 calendar and an 'Italian day' will take place in Pencoed Welfare Hall on April 12.

A fundraising coffee morning will be held in the Williams Memorial Hall on April 15 from

10am to 12pm. An appeal was made for tombola prizes and cakes; other stalls will be in attendance.

Admission is £3, including a cream scone with tea/coffee.

Transport for the BBC Tour on March 18 will depart from the WMH at 9am.

A quiz team was organised to participate in the PTA quiz evening on March 1 at 7.30pm.

A fashion show by Samantha B will be held on April 9 at 7pm in the WMH. Tickets are £5, including tea/coffee and biscuits.

The guest speaker, Angela Gorman, gave a very enlightening talk on 'Life for African Mothers'.

Angela retired in 2008 as a sister on a special neo-natal baby unit, and in 2005, after watching the TV programme Panorama about the plight of mothers in Chad, and how Dr. Grace was desperately trying to save the lives of pregnant women, she felt compelled to help and made contact to offer her services.

With the sum of £5,000 a group was set up to 'reduce the maternal mortality rate in Sub Saharan Africa'. They met with the United Nations and Panorama followed up the story.

After visiting Chad and experiencing the situation first hand, Angela works tirelessly to organise funds to enable her to purchase at cost price the necessary medications needed to treat the two main causes of maternal death. For Eclampsia (14 per cent), the treatment costs less than £3 per woman and for Post Partum Haemorrhage (30 per cent), the cost of three tablets to save a woman's life costs less than 60p.

The medications are bought and shipped directly to the hospitals where the risk of death in pregnancy is as high as 1:7; here in the UK the risk is currently assessed as 1:8,700.

Women produce 70 per cent of the wealth in developing countries, therefore by keeping women alive we help to lift families, communities and countries out of poverty. Women are not dying of diseases we cannot treat; they are dying because society has decided that they are not worth treating. The UN is trying to raise standards by 2015.

Baby clothes are also needed e.g. babygrows, knitted hats, cardigans and blankets. If you are able to contribute please contact Angela on 07984 786103, Ann O'Regan on 02920 561993 or a WI member.

Following the facts and information, Angela spoke of a spontaneous collection which raised a significant sum for necessary and vital medications.

For further details on future events please contact Sandra Davidson on 01656 669232.

The next meeting will be held on March 4 in the Williams Memorial Hall at 7.30pm and we will be entertained by pupils of Llangrallo School with repertoires from their Eisteddfod.

Guests and new members welcome to attend.

JJ

Margaret 'volunteers' for the Pencoed WI

OVER 50 members attended Pencoed WI's January meeting, what a good start to the New Year.

Our speaker was Margaret Rogers from Tonteg WI, who had been a volunteer steward at the 2012 Olympic Games.

She arrived looking very smart in her uniform (designed by Stella McCartney) and showed us all the equipment the stewards had been issued with, and went on to describe the lengthy interview process and her role at Wembley Stadium.

The organizational skills involved in this event were outstanding and hearing Margaret's talk really brought

this out.

I, for one, did not appreciate this, sitting in my armchair watching the television.

In February we had a complete change. The speaker this time was Mike Sullivan and his talk, entitled 'Days Out', gave many of us ideas of places to go and also happy memories of places visited.

Reading through our programme for the year, our president Val certainly seems to have found some really interesting and varied speakers, which I am sure our members will enjoy.

For further information about Pencoed WI please ring Val on 01656862181 or Pat on 01656860289.

PP

TONDU MAN MAKES A LEAP FOR LOVE!

FEBRUARY 15 will be a red letter day for Jon Pare from Tondy, when he takes part in a National Skydiving event called Jump For Love.

The skydive, which is in aid of Saying Goodbye, part of the Mariposa Trust, will see people jump at eight locations all over the country.

Jump For Love is a 'tandem' skydiving event, where people will take part in a 12,000 ft sponsored skydive to raise funds to support the work of the trust.

Each person who jumps will be representing the 254,000 babies lost each year through miscarriage or still birth in the UK.

The Mariposa Trust is a leading baby loss charity that provides remembrance services and support for anyone

who has experienced baby loss, whether during pregnancy, at birth or in infancy.

Jump for Love is a national fundraising project for the charity and it looks to raise

funds to support the ongoing work of the trust.

The charity provides services and support via two divisions, Saying Goodbye and also GrowingYou.

DEALING WITH THOSE NEGATIVE FEELINGS

AS part of the Big Lottery funded Siaradwn Ni - Let's Talk programme, the Bridge Mentoring Plus Scheme is offering a half-day free of charge anger management and emotional wellbeing course (Agored Cymru (OCN) Level 1) at the Zone, Bridge Mentoring Plus Scheme, 46 - 48 Dunraven Place, Bridgend, CF31 1JB on Monday, March 3 from 10am - 1pm.

Available to anyone aged over 16, the course is free of charge to people living and/or working in Bridgend or Neath Port Talbot county boroughs.

This training will raise awareness of participants' emotions and the behaviours that go with them. It will enable them to identify when anger has been used positively and negatively and to develop techniques and strategies to better manage and control anger. They will also examine the physical, emotional and societal effects of negative and aggressive behaviour on themselves and society. For details, call 01656 647891 or email: training@thebridgeimps.org.uk.

Who wants to build what and where?

Arbatran Ltd - 6 Hazel Mead, Brynmynyn, Bridgend - Crown raise two oak trees by reducing the loaded lower limbs overhanging the property by 40 per cent and remove dead wood. 3M (UK) plc - 3M centre, Technology Drive, Bridgend Science Park, Bridgend - Extend HGV turning area to the rear of the unit.

Mr R Harry - Sunnybank, Penycae, Bridgend - Single storey extensions on the south and rear elevations.

Biomet Merck Ltd - Biomet Merck Ltd, Brocastle Avenue, Waterton Industrial Estate, Bridgend -

Cladding of elevations and installation of seven lighting columns in car park. Mr Rob Morgan - 14 Chestnut Bush/Llwyn Castan, Broadlands, Bridgend - Proposed single storey extension to rear.

Wales and West Housing Assoc - 1 - 12 Western Court, Oaklands Road, Bridgend - Erection of summer house in communal gardens.

Miss L Mably - 19 Nant Ffwrnog, Cefn Glas, Bridgend - Single storey side extension.

Groundwork BNPT - Rear Brynglas Terrace, Caerau, Maesteg - Construct two metre high fence to rear of Brynglas Terrace.

Mr Jon Richards - 50 Beach Road, Porthcawl, Bridgend - New porch to front.

Mr Ian Williams - Greyfriars, 16 West Drive, Porthcawl - Demolish existing dwelling, retain existing garage and construct new dwelling.

Mr D Godbeer - Manor Farm Cottage, Porthcawl - Amended details to planning consent P/12/928/FUL involving extensions and covered walkway to barn.

Mrs Kathleen Evans - 24 Laleston Close, Porthcawl - Certificate of lawfulness for a proposed kitchen extension to the rear elevation.

Mr EP Wooster - 26 Birch Walk, Porthcawl, Bridgend - Single storey extension to side.

Mr J David - Land at Waterton Lane, Bridgend - Proposed construction of detached residential dwelling.

Mr Rossaye - 5 Wernlys Road,

Penyfa, Bridgend - Conservatory to rear elevation.

Mr Nigel Thomas - Caerau Police Station, Duffryn Road, Maesteg, Bridgend - Change of use from commercial to residential.

Mrs SM Smalldon - 23D Cefn Road, Cefn Cribwr, Bridgend - Car hard-standing and crossover.

Mr Andrew Stanford (QMech Ltd) - The Lodge, Blackmill, Bridgend - Cert of lawfulness existing - repair and maintain specialist and agricultural vehicles, race car build/prep/support.

Mr Mohammed Khaliq - Sea View Farm, Pyle Road, Porthcawl, Bridgend - Construct agricultural worker's dwelling.

Dr TV Rajasekhar - 24 Maesteg Road, Maesteg - Two-storey flat roof extension to rear elevation.

Mr David Jones - Merlyn House, 94 Cefn Road, Cefn Cribwr, Bridgend - First floor rear extension.

Aldi Stores Ltd - Aldi Stores, Llwyn Road, Maesteg, Bridgend - Amend condition 11 of P/95/215/FUL to allow delivery between 20.00 and 07.00.

Mr Paul Lada - 14 Heol Y Sheel, North Cornelly - Remove and replace side conservatory and erect new conservatory to rear.

Resources Directorate - BCBC Civic Offices Basement, Angel Street, Bridgend - Extension and alteration to existing basement mailroom to form new digital mailroom.

Mr White - 8 Heol Fair, Porthcawl - Lean-to entrance porch to front of dwelling.

James Building Design - 22 Hunter's Ridge, Brackla, Bridgend - Second storey extension over existing garage to provide two new bedrooms.

HD Ltd - The Coach House, Derwen Road, Bridgend - Internal and external redecoration works, minor internal partition adjustments, new entrance door to rear.

HD Ltd - The Coach House, Derwen Road, Bridgend - Internal and external redecoration works, minor internal partition adjustments, new entrance door to rear.

Kind hearts at the Pencoed Comprehensive



ABOVE: Jacob Davies and Liam Davies.

PENCOED Comprehensive School's Interact charity fundraising group planned a very successful Red Top Day on February 7.

Supported by their fellow pupils in the sixth form, members of the group decided to organise fundraising activities in aid of the British Heart Foundation.

Rhian Price, one of the Interact group members, said: "Because one of our friends, Chloe Thompson, in the sixth form suffers from a congenital heart disorder, we felt very strongly that we should support this particular charity. £450 was raised through various activities, including donations from pupils and staff for the privilege of wearing red tops, sales of badges and other items as well as competitions."

Another very kindhearted sixth former is Jacob Davies. On his own initiative, Jacob planned his own bungee jump last December, raising £810 for his friend Liam Davies, a year-11 pupil who is wheelchair-bound as a result of suffering from Friedreich Ataxia.

Liam's mother, Mrs Davies, said: "As a family, we're truly amazed at what Jacob has done. He's a true and generous friend to Liam. We're also very glad about the awareness raised by Jacob in the local community at this rare degenerative condition."

Porthcawl's 'Do-it-Yourself' Church!

by KEITH E MORGAN

Part I

THIS year on February 11, All Saints' Stone Church, Porthcawl, celebrates the 100th anniversary of its consecration.

However, and notwithstanding the existence of St John's Church in Newton, this was not the first Anglican church or the first All Saints' Church in Porthcawl – the western part of the parish of Newton-Nottage.

According to Leonard S Higgins, in his book entitled *Newton, Nottage and Porthcawl*, the first church in Porthcawl was the little Sailors' Mission that stood on the western side of the dock.

Rev Augustus Rickards Blundell was the chaplain of this small church during the period 1866 to 1868.

With the growth of the community, in what was then known as 'the port', the increasing ecumenical needs of this part of the parish were met by the erection of the old National School, on land given by James Brogden.

Following the Elementary Education Act of 1870, and on the instigation of the Rector, the Rev ED Knight, the school was opened in 1873, for the dual purpose of education and religion.

Services on Sunday and weekday evenings were held in the main assembly room, where an altar had been provided for the purpose.

The new school's first headmaster was Mr William Rees. The old National School was located on what was to become Lias Road and stood on the spot where the Co-operative Store now stands. The school was demolished in April 1962.

Porthcawl continued to grow and by 1891, the number of inhabitants had grown to very nearly 1,000: it was time to erect a church. Lord Wimborne gave an acre of land as a site and plans were drawn up.

The building, which was estimated to cost £4,000, was not proceeded with. Instead, a corrugated iron church – the original All Saints 'Tin' church, was erected on the site (roughly where the All Saints' church hall now stands).

This was opened on All Saints' Day, November 1, 1892 and served the parishioners of Porthcawl and the summer visitors to the town, until February 11, 1914, when the present All Saints' church was consecrated.

Once the new stone church had been built, the old 'Tin' church was dismantled and sold to the vicar and churchwardens of Llangynwyd.

It was re-erected in Maesteg as a Mission church.

ALL SAINTS STONE CHURCH, PORTHCAWL CELEBRATES CENTENARY, 1914 – 2014

According to Neil Perry of the Llynfi Valley Historical Society, who has kindly provided the photograph of the 'Tin' Mission church, it was re-dedicated as the Holy Innocents' church, and served the community in Maesteg until it was demolished in the late 1960s.

To meet the needs brought about by the religious revivals of the 19th century, a wide variety of galvanised corrugated iron churches, mission halls and chapels were designed and built by the early Victorian engineers.

These, affectionately called 'Tin' buildings, came in 'flat-pack' kit form and could be bought from mail order catalogues to be erected by the supplier or as 'do-it-yourself' by the purchaser.

William Cooper advertises his commercial business as Horticultural Providers, a clear indication that the success of Joseph Paxton's modular cast iron design for the Crystal Palace of the 1851 Great Exhibition, had not escaped the eyes or ingenuity of the Victorian entrepreneurs in the greenhouse trade, who were quick to grasp a business opportunity.

The coloured picture of Oletha and All Saints' Church (the 'Tin' church), is shown (above right) as a view on a postcard which is franked August 12, 1907.

At that time, the two semi-detached houses were located on an extension of Lias Road (now Gordon Road) and one can just see the two end properties of Victoria Avenue in the gap between these houses and All Saints' 'Tin' church.

If a photographer was to try and take a similar picture today, he would need to stand with his camera at the top end of Esplanade Avenue where it joins Gordon Road.

All Saints' 'Tin' church has, of course, long gone. It stood on the plot of ground now occupied by the existing All Saints' church hall, which, as well as the present All Saints' church, will be invisible to the observer, because there are now three buildings in the way; the telephone exchange, Plasisa Newydd (now the Post Office delivery office) and the branch library.

Part 2 of this article, will cover the centenary of the new stone built All Saints' church in Porthcawl.



Oletha and All Saints' Church, Porthcawl.



ABOVE
Holy Innocents
Church, Maesteg.

Bridgend Bridge Club round-up

THE results for Bridgend Bridge Club for recent events are:

February 5 – First Irene Thomas and Graham Jones; second T Haworth and Rob Charlesworth; third Rob Forman and Alan Heath.

February 7 – The first round of the club handicap: Pairs, first John Henson and Terry Dolan; second Mari Jones and Irene Wickham; third John Moore and Mildred Trigg-Knight.

On Thursdays from 2pm to 5pm, also at Nolton Church Hall there are gentle bridge sessions for the less experienced where assistance is readily available.

The best placed improvers on February 6 were Colin Lewis, Stuart Davies, Francis Heslin and Dee French.

Lessons for improvers also take place on a Thursday at 2pm. To register an interest call either Steve Burgoyne on 01656 661968 or John Evans on 01656 880372.

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Bus speaker

TODAY (February 13) the Young At Heart Club's speaker is from the bus company which is now serving the village communities.

I understand questions will be answered as to how long the service will continue. This meeting will be of interest to the villagers who are so dependent on a village bus service.

The Young At Heart Club meetings are held in the Treoes village hall between 1pm and 3.30pm each Thursday.

Farewell!

IT'S time to say goodbye to Vera and Terry Jones, who have been staunch supporters of the Young At Heart Club for many years.

Vera left the bright lights of London in 1957 to begin a new life in Wales, where she was destined to meet Terry, who became her devoted husband.

They made their home in the Fferm Goch area of Llangan but now, due to Vera's health, they are moving to the Barry area which will be more convenient for buses and shopping, and they will be living in closer proximity to their daughter.

During the time they have lived at Fferm Goch, Vera has been a regular worshipper at St Mary Church and St Canna's Llangan. This was possible through the kindness of church organist Mary Lloyd, who transported her to the services.

Saron service

A SERVICE will be held in Saron Chapel, Treoes, on Sunday, February 16, at 3pm, when the officiating minister is Rev P Dennier. Everyone is welcome.

The January storms move on into February as the photographers head for Porthcawl!

AS the storms continue, it gets harder and harder to come up with an image that hasn't been seen before.

Glyn Evans decided to snap the snappers – as large numbers turned up in Porthcawl, all looking to replicate the 'waves breaking over the harbour light' image that has, by now, travelled around the world!

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

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ABOVE and BELOW: Crowds of photographers line up to try and take their own Porthcawl storm shot.



ABOVE and RIGHT: As the raging sea lashes the Heritage Coast near St Donat's, it's clear that in some areas, coastal erosion is inevitable!



Hunting for a new home for Hunter

The GEM has joined forces with the Dog's Trust, Court Colman, to find homes for canine guests at its rehoming centre.

HUNTER is a nine-year old German Shepherd. He is a sensitive chap and can be worried in new situations, but when he knows you, he will be extremely loyal.

He is good with other dogs and he could live with another dog. We are looking for a quiet home for Hunter with owners who have had previous German Shepherd experience.

He will need to be rehomed in an adult only home, and due to his sensitive nature, potential adopters will need to visit Hunter at the centre multiple times to help build a bond with him.

In the right home, Hunter will make a rewarding companion.

If you can offer Hunter or any of our wonderful dogs a home, please call on 01656 725219 or pop into Dogs Trust Bridgend. We are open 12 noon – 4pm every day except Monday.

Linda Feagan
Supporter relations officer
Dog's Trust Bridgend.



Tory AM unhappy with Airport's express bus service performance

A REPORT into the Welsh Government-subsidised T9 Airport Express, has raised "serious questions" according to South Wales Central AM, Andrew RT Davies.

The report, undertaken by Professor Stuart Cole and commissioned by the Welsh Government, assesses the effectiveness of the T9 route and makes suggestions for improving the service.

Mr Davies, Leader of the Welsh Conservatives, said that it was concerning that basic steps were not taken by the Welsh Government before its launch, and lamented the higher than expected cost to the taxpayer in its first four months of active service.

The report showed that the T9 Airport Express, run by First Cymru has cost the Welsh Government £242,691 to date (after four months) at a subsidy of £11.33 per passenger.

The report also said no targets for passenger numbers were set prior to its launch, and no market and development strategy was undertaken.

Mr Davies said: "Mr Cole himself admits that this is a high subsidy for a service of its type, but the fact that it has already cost the taxpayer almost a quarter of a million pounds in just four months is worrying."

"I live in the Vale and see the T9 several times a week. The reality is that it frequently runs empty and the fact that it has been called the 'Empty 9' by locals says it all."

"What concerns me most of all is that Mr Cole's report reveals that almost no strategy was put in place to ensure that the route would be a success."

by PHILIP IRWIN

There were no targets set for passenger numbers and, worst of all, there was no market and development strategy, because it was rushed so quickly into service.

"I have every respect for the advice offered by Professor Cole and I sincerely hope that his recommendations improve its viability."

Mr Davies had also suggested that Vale residents should be allowed to get on and off the bus at a few selected stops, and he said he was disappointed that this looked to be unlikely to happen.

He said: "I had hoped that the Welsh Government might look at the viability of including local and express services on this route, particularly in light of the fact that residents of Rhosneigr have lost their own service that covered much of this route."

"Whilst I understand that an express service needs to be quick and reliable, it is disappointing that the Welsh Labour Government now looks unlikely to consider making the T9 available to local commuters – many of whom are seeking to travel all the way in to Cardiff itself."

"Allowing the service to pick up from a limited number of stops on the route on one of the T9's three hourly services would not only have significantly improved links between the Vale and Cardiff, it would potentially have gone some way towards addressing the disappointing take-up in passenger numbers to date."

Heartening news on cancer survival highlights Assembly's care plans

THIS week, I was pleased to launch the 2014 Marie Curie Great Daffodil Appeal in the Senedd.

All over Wales, the Marie Curie daffodils are appearing on lapels, and donations are being made to support the excellent care provided by Marie Curie nurses to terminally ill patients in the Marie Curie hospice and in the community.

On recent visits to the hospice in Penarth, I have witnessed at first hand that care and commitment to patients and their families.

Gareth Williams, Chair of the Wales Advisory Board, welcomed Assembly Members, Marie Curie staff and volunteers, as well as health professionals in primary and secondary care to the Daffodil launch.

I thanked Marie Curie and all those involved in the provision of end of life care, which is a high priority for the Welsh Government, with the support of the Health Minister, Mark Drakeford AM who has said that:

"End of Life Care is care for a person – not a patient, or a service user, but a person in the full and rounded sense. The plan sets out clear ways in which the voice of the individual, supported by those closest to them, is heard and respected at the centre of the service they need."

Last July, the Health Minister confirmed that £6.5m will be allocated to specialist palliative care services across Wales for 2013/14, including £2.4m for hospices.

The close partnership between the NHS in Wales and the hospice movement is long-standing and essential in delivering the right services for people who need the best end of life care.

This focus on Marie Curie follows an important Welsh Government report earlier this month on our Cancer Delivery Plan, which showed that cancer survival rates in Wales are improving faster than anywhere else in the UK.

The report demonstrates real improvements in cancer care in Wales over the past year and as the Health Minister stated: "This is a tribute to all those involved in the planning and delivery of care."

While the report shows areas of progress, it also highlights areas to focus on, such as reversing the decline in the uptake of bowel cancer screening.

The Minister is clear that while our cancer survival rates show improvement, we need to reach the levels achieved in a number of other European

countries and we need to continue to make progress with research, training and new technologies.

The publication of the Welsh Government and MacMillan Cancer Support's 'Cancer Patient Experience Survey 2013' provided the results of a survey which monitors developments in cancer care by measuring progress from a patient's point of view.

The survey reported the views of 7,352 cancer patients and with a 69 per cent response rate, a robust and comprehensive analysis of people's experience of cancer has emerged. This is reflected in the views of cancer patients in Wales who rated their care as either 'excellent' or 'very good'.

The survey showed that 85 per cent of patients felt they were always treated with respect and dignity by staff, 87 per cent had confidence and trust in doctors and nurses caring for them and 94 per cent said they had enough privacy when being treated.

While these findings are encouraging, the survey also shows areas where further improvement is still needed but we have the clear evidence where we should be focusing our efforts.

With £4.6m Welsh Government investment, new cutting-edge radiotherapy equipment is being installed in the Velindre Cancer Centre, which will provide highly specialised and advanced Stereotactic Body Radiotherapy treatment to thousands of cancer patients in Wales every year.

We are investing in the most up-to-date technology available to us in Europe. We are also exceeding our targets for recruitment to clinical trials.

This week, as a result of careful financial management in an ever-tightening public finances climate, I was able to announce a further investment of £50million for the NHS in Wales in my supplementary Budget for this financial year, on top of the additional £150m announced in October.

Health is a priority for this Welsh Government.

ASSEMBLY NOTES



by Jane Hutt AM
(Minister for Finance)

Life-long pals are ready to settle down quietly together!

DOGS Trust Bridgend's resident globe-trotters Poppy and Clyde are a well-travelled pair of pooches, who are looking to pack in their jet-set lifestyle and settle down in a new home in time for Valentine's Day.

The inseparable duo, who previously lived with their owners in Spain and Bulgaria, are now ready for a new adventure – finding their 'furry tail ending' in a loving new home.

The GEM has joined forces with the Dog's Trust to find caring new owners for animals at its Bridgend Rehoming Centre (Telephone 01656 725219).

The adorable pair are devoted to each other and are looking to find a loving home to spend the rest of their lives together.

Poppy and Clyde were brought in to Dogs Trust Bridgend as part of Dogs Trust's canine care card scheme after their owner sadly passed away late last year.

Staff at the centre in Pen-y-Fai are now appealing for a very special owner who can provide a loving retirement home for the lifelong friends.

They both have passports so though they love their home comforts, they would be happy to accompany their new owners on adventures abroad.

Poppy is a 12-year-old Spaniel-cross, who is still young at heart and loves nothing more than stretching her legs on long walks, or having a run around outdoors.

Clyde is a sweet, ten-year-old Podengo, who adores playing with his doggie pals, especially Poppy.

They would suit a quiet home where they can live out their golden years together.

Dogs Trust Bridgend Rehoming Centre Manager Beverley Price says: "It has been such a sad year for the pair, so it would be great to see them embark on one of the most important journeys of all – to the loving home they deserve in time for Valentine's day."

If you are interested in rehoming a rescue dog, please call Dogs Trust Bridgend on 01656 725 219 or visit www.dogstrust.org.uk.



These two devoted pals, Poppy and Clyde, are desperate for a new home after their owner died.

Vale MP hits out at missed ambulance response times

WITH targeted ambulance response times again missed across the Vale in January, local MP Alun Cairns has called on the Welsh Government to resolve this "persistent problem."

He pointed out that Welsh Government statistics reported only 54 per cent of category A calls arrived within the target time across the Vale. This was well below the 65 per cent expectation and below the 57 per cent Welsh average. In England the target response time is 75 per cent," the MP said.

"This problem has been going on for years and enough is enough. Over that time, I have received reports of pensioners who have been left stranded waiting for hours, and in another case, a nervous neighbour simply driving an ill patient to the hospital themselves."

"This is a constituency-wide problem and I con-

tinue to be contacted by constituents from Barry and Llantwit Major to Cowbridge, who feel they are being let down by the service.

"Despite the best efforts of dedicated ambulance staff, the service is not delivering the standard of service that patients expect and deserve. I am concerned that there appears to be little action by the Welsh Government."

"It is also worth considering that if a Community First Responder arrives within the target response time, that is counted as having achieved the target, although the patient could still be waiting for an ambulance for a considerable period longer."

"Hardworking paramedics are being left waiting at A and E departments. They are being held back and not freed up to travel to new patients. Waiting times and A and E are far too long and are impacting ambulance response times."

Cross-party occasion in Vale 'fantastic' says MP



PETERSTON SUPER ELY residents recently joined local MP Alun Cairns

(above) for an event that involved wine tasting, Chinese meal and a talk on a range of anecdotes from Parliament.

Alun Cairns commented: "This was a fantastic community event, which crossed the political boundaries."

"I was delighted to have the presence of well known Plaid and UKIP supporters."

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Soroptimists rally again to Velindre Hospital's Easter Chicks appeal

IN wet and windy weather, president Audrey, of Barry and District Soroptimists, delivered another batch of Easter chicks to bring a cheerful splash of spring colour to the Velindre Appeals office.

The appeals officer at Velindre Hospital, Julie Smith MBE, started the 'Chick Knit' 17 years ago, when her aim was to reach £1million! Having reached her target she is now aiming for her second million, as there is no let-up in the demand for chicks!

Over 13 years ago, club member Maywin Thomas learned of the Easter Chick Appeal and, with her encouragement, members, family and friends have donated more than 12,000 chicks to the appeal.

Volunteers fill the knitted chicks with chocolate eggs and these are sold for £1 each. About 90 per cent of the chicks are sold in schools. The children love them and like to collect them each year.

As well as the chicks, this year the club knitted Father Christmas, snowmen and Christmas pudding decorations from patterns supplied by Velindre Hospital.

These were used to decorate the club's tree at the annual Christmas tree festival in St Augustine's church, Penarth and then sold, with all proceeds going to Velindre.

Money was also again donated to the appeal by club member and Barry florist Hilary West who, together with her staff, Laura, Samantha, Jane and Maxine knit, sew up, supply the chocolate eggs, and sell not only chicks, but also snowmen at Christmas, and Easter bunnies.

The Velindre appeal is always looking for new knitters, and if anyone would like to be involved, please telephone Julie Smith on (029) 2031 6211.

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ABOVE:

The photo shows Julie receiving the chicks from president Audrey.

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Penarth Learning Community remains on track for completion date in October

PENARTH Learning Community is due for completion on October 4 this year and lots of progress has been made in recent months.

Two schools are being constructed – a replacement of the current St Cyres School and the provision of a new special education needs facility replacing Ashgrove School, Ysgol Erw'r Delyn, and Ysgol Maes Dyfan which moves from Barry.

Associate project manager, Ron McClean, told The GEM: "Work to the two schools and the respite building is on track for completion in October of this year, including external areas and car parking."

"On occupation of the new building, the second phase of the project will involve the demolition of the old St Cyres School, Ysgol Erw'r Delyn and Ashgrove, and the creation of the all weather pitch as well as grassed pitches for football and rugby and the creation of multi use games areas."

The project's budget is £48million. The project and cost management has been undertaken by AECOM, the architects are HLM, the structural engineers are ARUP, and the main contractor is Leadbitter.



ABOVE:
The main entrance to Ysgol y Deri.



ABOVE: St Cyres main sports hall.



Looking towards the main entrance of St Cyres.



ABOVE:
The main atrium of St Cyres School.



ABOVE: Associate project manager, Ron McClean of AECOM.

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ESTYN REPORT HIGHLIGHTS 'MANY STRENGTHS' AT COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

A RECENT Estyn inspection has given Cowbridge Comprehensive School a good report – and has identified “many strengths”.

The school was inspected in December last year by Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, in December 2013.

The team of inspectors judged that the school's current perform-

ance, and also prospects for improvement, were both good.

A school spokesperson said: “These judgements were arrived at because ‘standards achieved in all key stages of the school are consistently high in all indicators’, and ‘behaviour and attitudes to learning are consistently good’”.

The spokesperson went on to say that attendance was “above expectations” and commented that “the leadership team has a thorough

by PHILIP IRWIN

understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement”.

It found that pupils enjoyed lessons and had “positive attitudes to learning”. The inspectors went on to say that there were “high levels of pupil involvement in all aspects of school life, especially the fields of performing arts and physical education”.

There was praise also a very positive mention of the work of the Eco-committee and the role that the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme plays in developing young people's life skills. The report also stated: “The school works well with partners to support its pupils and improve standards and wellbeing”.

A key feature, the report said, was that the school “communicates well with parents, who are highly supportive. The number of par-

ents attending school events is high”.

The headteacher, Mrs Debra Thomas, said: “We are pleased that the inspection team recognised the many strengths of the school, particularly the high expectations and standards achieved by our young people.”

“We look forward to achieving greater success and improvement for all members of the school community”.

Scouts and Cubs parade in the Mayor's parlour!



1st Barry Sea Scouts in the Mayor's parlour.



The 2nd and 4th Barry Cubs.

MAYOR of Barry, Coun Claire Curtis, recently welcomed Barry Sea Scouts and Cubs to the Mayor's parlour for a visit.

Last month, the 1st Barry Sea Scouts were invited to tell the Mayor, invited guests and parents all about their recent trip to Saudi Arabia. AM for the Vale, Jane Hutt, along with Chris Elmore the Vale of Glamorgan cabinet member for children's services, also attended the presentation. Coun Curtis explained: “Jane Hutt and I were fortunate to be invited to the headquarters of the 1st Barry Sea Scouts before they embarked on their adventure to Saudi Arabia at the end of 2013.

“I asked the Scouts to come to the Barry Town Council offices and tell us all about their trip on their return”.

Jane Hutt added: “This was a wonderful opportunity for these five Scouts and it gave them the chance to learn about a different culture and to build links between Wales and Saudi Arabia: I was delighted to hear that they are still in contact with their hosts since their return.”

This month, the 2nd and 4th Barry Cubs went along to the Mayor's Parlour as part of their Community Badge project. The Mayor told the cubs about Barry Town Council and her role and then held a question and answer session with the children. Coun Curtis said: “I was delighted to invite the Cubs and their

leaders to the Barry Town Council Offices and enjoyed showing them the various historic photographs and pieces that are held in the Mayor's parlour.

“As well as the Q&A session, we also held a quiz and the children were given the opportunity to draw any of the items on display; the Mace proved to be very popular!”

The Cubs have already visited a PCSO and a fire station and have only to arrange a visit to a church to complete the tasks needed to earn their badge.

Coun Curtis added: “The Cubs were all very well-behaved, and I hope they enjoyed their evening as much as I did”.

RIGHT: Jane Hutt AM with Hair Business stylists including owner, Leighanne Phillips and Leigh Ann Summers, who won an ISA award certificate.



Hair stylists take case for registration to the Senedd...

COWBRIDGE hairdressers, The Hair Business and Fich and Ramous, were at an event in the Senedd recently to highlight the Hairdressing Council's campaign for

mandatory state registration of all hairdressers and barbers.

They included Leigh Ann Summers and Leighanne Phillips, winner of the Women in Business in Wales Award, who has run her successful salon The Hair Business since 1990.

They petitioned Vale AM Jane Hutt, who said: “I am fully in support of State Registration and congratulate the skilled hairdressers and barbers who received certificates and awards at the Senedd.”

Record breaker joins Vale Show

PLANS are well under way for this year's Vale of Glamorgan Show at Fonmon Castle on Wednesday, August 13.

The committee is pleased to welcome world record breaker and giant vegetable grower Phillip Vowels, who will now be joining us as horticultural show manager.

He brings with him years of growing and gardening experience and hopes to introduce some new classes to the show, including giant vegetables.

Phillip looks forward to welcoming new and past exhibitors to the show and would also like to invite schools to be part of this great show by introducing classes where schools can enter, flowers, vegetables and best school's children's garden. He is happy to help schools with seeds and with any advice they might need.

If you would like any further information please feel welcome to

contact the horticultural secretary Gail Wintle on 07976 935 223 or by email gailvegshow@gmail.com NG



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Charity golf match in memory of little Seren

THE Cardiff and Newport SANDS charity will hold its Seren Roberts Memorial Tournament at Cottrell Park Golf Resort, followed by a fundraising dinner on June 20.

The charity support bereaved parents following the loss of a baby through stillbirth, or death shortly after birth.

It is entirely self-funded, run by a group of bereaved parents who devote the time on a purely voluntary basis.

The golf event has become their main fundraising event of the year, enabling it to provide hospitals in the area with memory boxes for bereaved parents, and monthly support meetings.

It has set up bereavement rooms in University Hospital Wales, Cardiff, Royal Gwent in Newport, and the Royal Glamorgan in Llantrisant, includ-

ing providing 'Cold Cots', which allows parents to stay with their babies a little longer should they wish to.

Additionally, they have provided bereavement training to local midwives and part funded a baby remembrance garden in Thornhill Cemetery, Cardiff.

The golf event is organised by bereaved father Gwyn Roberts, who lost his daughter Seren in 2005.

Gwyn said: "When my wife and I lost Seren on November 5, 2005, we were lost. We were distraught. While the level of care we received in the hospital was faultless, we just didn't know what to do.

"Then, just before leaving, one of the midwives happened to scribble down a contact number for the national SANDS charity on the back of an envelope.

"The support we received from

them in those early days was priceless. Looking back now, it seems so lucky it was that particular midwife was there when we were leaving to give us the details.

"Had we not had it, I don't know where we would be, or how we would have gotten through those first traumatic few days and weeks."

The event is not just for golfers. Non golfers are welcome at the evening dinner.

Entries for the event can be made via www.cardiff-sands.co.uk/Golf.htm, and at prices of only £45 per attendee for the whole event, or £25 for the evening only, it also provides fantastic value for money (other payment options, including group bookings are available on the website).

Contact Gwyn by emailing golf@cardiff-sands.co.uk.

Doc's putting on his dancing shoes for breast cancer centre

SUMIT GOYAL, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board's lead clinician for breast services, is taking part in a 'Strictly Top Dancer' event to raise funds for the breast centre at

University Hospital Llandough (UHL).

It sees eight companies competing in the Latin dance competition for the coveted Glitterball at the gala evening, presented by Julien Macdonald OBE, and raising money for the Breast Centre along the way.

Mr Goyal said: "I have endured three months of intensive training from my professional dancer Sam, where we are learning two Latin American dances and will be performing them live on the night.

"I have learnt the cha cha and rumba and if I am lucky enough to get through to the finals, there will be a Bollywood-themed show dance.

"It has been an amazing experience and Sam has been a patient teacher. We had a dress

rehearsal last week and I was amazed at the effort everybody has put into this event, both the dancers and the organisers.

"So for one night only I am hanging up my scalpel and theatre blues to take to the dance floor with Sam, to compete for the Glitterball."

Money for disaster relief



VIC HOPKINS butchers at High Street, Barry, raised £370 from the sale of 5p carrier bags, and this was donated to the Philippines.

"Now, let's see how much we can raise for the flood victims of Somerset," said Mr Anthony Hopkins.

The Ty Hafan lottery draw winners

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number D813:

● **£2,000:** 465169,
● **£10:** 231216,
181369, 409320,
663830, 477996, 930953,
937149, 653432,
647180, 331277, 605249,
312344, 140454, 881559,
534189, 883198, 371331,
578020, 540611, 144602.
● **£5:** 107164, 669812,
174970, 202923, 433176,
338794, 837799, 803686,
396776, 240091, 767373,
143409, 558270, 268482,
132946, 602496, 590558,
246955, 776506, 647725,
565419, 153762, 168084,
710620, 322190, 515682,
432969, 393918, 379178,
816320, 641269, 222154,
246643, 416132, 347159,
357269, 921750, 158233,
286237, 707843, 510353,
766126, 130877, 229730,
217412, 703550, 494699,
574222, 769271,
971444, 562360, 452249,
443230, 438957, 700044,
315304, 232333, 570844,
391174, 458.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please telephone 029 2053 2300.

Safety call at Barry junction

A **BARRY** councillor has come out in support of residents' calls for safety improvements at the junction of Gladstone Road and Everard Street.

Independent councillor Richard Bertin, who represents the Court ward, is asking Vale Council to put double yellow lines on the corner of this junction to

prevent further accidents at this site.

Coun Bertin said: "There have been many accidents at this junction lately – and near misses – as drivers are obscured by blind parking on the corners, making the junction a serious hazard."

He now plans to visit residents in Everard Street with a petition calling for action.

Beekeepers are hoping for the arrival of spring

LATEST NEWS FROM THE FONMON APIARY

NOT a lot is happening at present, as the unsettled weather is giving the bees and us beekeepers a hard time.

When dry spells occur, the bees are out flying around the apiary but no further. These exits from the hive are cleansing flights.

So, what is a cleansing flight? Well the bees are consuming food from the stores in the hive and, of course, bodily wastes build up. When conditions allow, the bees will pop out to relieve themselves.

Spring is trying to put in an appearance. I can see some daisies in the orchard and even some snowdrops in other places. Pussy willow is out and there are daffodils out in my own garden, but unless the weather improves, and more blooms appear, the bees will not be able to avail themselves of pollen or nectar.

With the days lengthening, the queens will be laying. I can see evidence of this when checking the mite drop trays that I have in various colonies. Dead mites are visible and when I examine the tray debris more closely under the large magnifier there are very

pale mites observed.

These are mites that did not reach maturity when a new bee was ready to emerge from its sealed cell. Mature mites are dark brown in colour.

How do I know these pale mites are immature? The answer is provided by the life cycle of the Varroa mite. Let us follow this from its initiation.

Step 1, the queen bee will lay an egg into a prepared cell and the welfare of this egg is taken care of by bees within the hive (adult winter bees). In three days, the egg will hatch out into a very tiny grub and these same bees will feed and cosset this grub for a period of five days or so. This passage of time, plus the feeding, will see the grub much enlarged and starting to fill the whole of the cell. At this juncture feeding will cease.

Step 2 will be the sealing of the cell with a wax capping. The enclosed grub will go through a period of metamorphosis, eventually emerging as a new bee ready to take its place within the colony.

However, the Varroa mite senses that the developed grub is about to be sealed in its cell so in it goes to be sealed in as well.

The mite carries out its own breeding cycle while it is enclosed with the developing grub. It draws sustenance from the body fluids of its host (the grub) and while doing so it passes on viruses that lead to sick and unhealthy bees emerging.

Often, the developed bee chews through the wax capping and emerges into the hive, but a number of the mites are always under-developed at this time, hence the pale (not brown) bodies I observe in the tray debris.

When and if spring does arrive, the queen bee will step up the egg laying process. This provides the mites with the opportunity to expand their numbers and I will find more immature dead mites along with mature ones.

There is more to the story of the close relationship between mite and bee, but I hope you get a rough idea of how things go.

As with last year, many colonies have come through winter but without a decent spell of spring weather, we may well have a repeat of last year's losses.

Fingers and legs are crossed.

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For an appointment or further information, please telephone Maesteg Animal Welfare Society on 01656 721496 or 01656 769855. Please leave a message on our answerphone if we are unavailable.

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Welcome to Newbold Solicitors

OUR legal surgery (held at our Barry office) has been a great success with many landlords finding themselves surprised at how little they actually know about housing law.

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So we would like to take the opportunity of introducing our firm to you. Newbold Solicitors firm was begun in 1999 by Glynis Newbold. The firm was based in Cwmbran and is very well respected in the Cwmbran/Newport area.

In 2012, Newbold Solicitors was purchased by Brendons Solicitors, merging the firms but keeping the Newbold name.

We have four offices covering the south Wales area. We are one of the busiest law firms in Wales for conveyancing and are often ranked in the top 10 spot.

We are a firm that covers most areas of law, with a number of very experienced solicitors.



A partner and housing

department supervisor, Catherine Hartland, was runner-up for the award of 'Best Woman in Law 2013' and was a finalist in 'Best Business Woman 2012'. Catherine has been invited to work with the University of Wales, and many local estate agents, landlords and housing providers.

Catherine says: "The reason Newbolds has been a success is down to having the right team. At Newbolds, we strive to be the best at what we do, we provide a unique service and aim to provide excellent client care."

"At Newbolds, we believe that regardless of the problems you are facing, we can provide practical, straightforward advice tailored to the needs of our clients."

Our Neath office recently hosted an evening event for local estate agents in the new Paprika Indian restaurant, to celebrate the recent opening of our new office. We are pleased to say the evening was a great success and were even joined by Osprey and Wales rugby stars Richard Hibbard and Dan Biggar (see pictures above), who are friends of Tony Lewis of our Neath office.

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Have you made your will yet?

EVERY adult in the UK should consider making a Will, and here are some of the reasons why:

- Without a Will, the state directs who inherits your estate, so the people you wish to benefit may get nothing.

- Without a Will, if you are married, you may think that your estate will pass to your spouse in any event, but this is not necessarily the case.

- If you are not married to your partner, the law does not automatically recognise partners as having the same rights as husbands, wives and civil partners, and your partner may get nothing.

- If you have children, there may be uncertainty about who will look after or provide for them, should you die.

- Certain people could make a claim on your estate if you have no Will, because they may depend upon you financially.

- Inheritance tax issues may arise if not addressed in your Will.

Wills should be kept up to date and renewed upon any change of circumstances; for example, marriage, divorce, separation, death of a loved one, or upon having a child.

Excluding certain beneficiaries in your Will may also cause potential difficulties as they may have the right to make a claim against your estate. Special care is needed if you exclude persons who might expect to benefit under your Will.

Ensure that you have a Will in place and that it is up to date to avoid any undesired consequences and complications.

Carli Evans is a solicitor with Messrs

Passmores Solicitors and a member of Solicitors for the Elderly, a specialist panel of solicitors dealing with elderly client matters and the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners.



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HOW 'IT' HELPS COMBAT LONELINESS

THE Older People's Commissioner for Wales' team saw first-hand this week how IT is being used to improve wellbeing and reduce loneliness and isolation among older people.

Sarah Rochira's team visited the Springbank Care Home on College Road in Barry, where volunteers from the Getting on With IT project visit twice a week to help residents to get online.

The project aims to help people who live in care homes and sheltered accommodation stay in touch with family and friends by email and Skype, expand their social network and surf the World Wide Web.

Sarah said: "For many older people, access to ongoing

opportunities to develop and learn new skills is an essential element of maintaining their health, independence and well-being.

"Getting on With IT is a wonderful project run by the Vale Centre for voluntary services, which also helps to reduce loneliness by providing opportunities for older people to socialise.

"It opens up a new world to many older people, who are now able to increase contact with friends and family that they don't get to see very often and use the internet to improve their knowledge of a wide range of subjects."

Volunteers visit Springbank Care Home every Monday

and Wednesday and link a laptop to a widescreen television, demonstrating what can be achieved using the internet.

When the Commissioner's team visited, 10 residents were using the internet to watch videos of Michael Buble and Charlie Chaplin, as well as searching for answers to a quiz they had recently taken part in.

Residents have also used Skype to speak to family and friends around the UK and in Canada.

The visit formed part of the Commissioner's Engagement Roadshow, which met with over 5,400 people at 180 events across Wales in 2013.

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Maendy YFC scoops three trophies in a busy week!

A BUSY week for Maendy Young Farmers Club has rounded off three months of hard work and preparation for the annual Glamorgan Federation of Young Farmers Clubs' stage competition.

A well supported dress rehearsal on February 4 at Barry Memorial Hall kick-started a weekend full of singing, dancing and comic scenes.

Thanks go to Fiona Martin and Glamorgan Hunt for warming up the crowd with a quiz. 'Return to Paradise' follows Grandpa Sid who reminisces about the good old days of the fairground to his grandson Tommy, while they stare through the gates of Paradise Park, an abandoned fairground.

Unknown to them, the fairground is opened at midnight by a troop of freaks.

The next stop was the Grand Pavilion in Porthcawl, which saw the seven YFC clubs in Glamorgan go head-to-head for the opportunity to represent the county at the Wales finals in Llandudno next month.

Neath opened the two-night event followed by performances from Gelligaer, Maendy and Bridgend.

On the second evening, members and supporters returned to the Pavilion for more

entertainment from Llantrisant, Wick and Gower.

Following this, judge Chris Jaeger gave his final adjudication and presentation of awards.

Maendy's efforts were rewarded in the form of three trophies – Emily Farr winning best actress; the award for best director/producer and, most importantly, the winning shield for the best overall performance.

The club extend thanks to all cast members, backstage helpers and parents – it really was a team effort!

However, our journey does not stop here!

On March 15, the cast and entourage will take the show on the road, travelling to Llandudno to challenge our counterparts from across Wales, hoping to do Glamorgan proud – and to add to Maendy's previous successes at this level in the drama competition.

Venue Cymru, Llandudno will host this year's Wales competition on March 15 – 16.

This is a fantastic opportunity for team building, raising the profile of Glamorgan Young Farmers and showcasing the talents that young people and the YFC organisation has to offer. For more information about Maendy YFC please visit www.maendy-yfc.com.

Hannah Lewis



The Candyman and dancers.



The Governor, Tom Rees.



Fairground freaks Sophie Thomas, Emma Popham and Louisa Knowles.

Electoral register is being updated

HOUSEHOLDERS in the Vale are currently being visited by house-to-house canvassers, who are updating the electoral register.

Working on behalf of the Vale Council, they are visiting all properties that have not returned an electoral registration form.

• All canvassers will carry an authorisation letter to confirm they are employed by the council, so please ensure you ask to see this.

They will only ask for

the names of people over the age of 16, who are permanently resident at properties who have not returned the registration form.

If residents are 16 or 17 years-of-age, they may be asked for their date of birth.

They will NOT be asked for further personal information.

The canvass will finish on Sunday, February 23. If you have concerns about a canvasser, please call the council's contact centre on 01446 700111.

We're listening – come talk to us



Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board is launching a series of **concerns clinics** for patients or relatives with issues about care to meet us face-to-face; and hopefully work with us to make improvements. Executives and senior clinicians will be there to listen and talk through people's concerns. ABM Community Health Council will also be present to offer independent advice on complaints procedures.

Chief Executive, Paul Roberts, said that even though the vast majority of care in ABMU hospitals is of a high standard, more needed to be done, and listening to patients, their families and carers was crucial. He explained:

"We want to meet patients, relatives and carers who have serious concerns about care and who feel they have not yet had the answers they need. We will listen and learn from them, and we hope some will also agree to work with us to make changes. Patient and family's perspectives will be at the heart of improvements."

The first concerns clinics will be held in the **Princess of Wales Hospital** in Bridgend between **5pm and 7.30pm** on the following dates:

Monday, 24th February 2014, and Thursday, 27th February 2014
Tuesday, 4th March 2014, and Wednesday 5th March 2014

If you would like to attend, please contact us to make an appointment. You can telephone (office hours) 01656 754194. Or, email us on ABM.chiefexec@wales.nhs.uk



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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg
University Health Board

Further clinics at other ABMU hospitals will be announced later.

Rydym yn gwrando – dewch i siarad â ni

Mae Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Abertawe Bro Morgannwg yn lansio cyfres o **glinigau pryderon** er mwyn i gleifion neu berthnasau sydd â phroblemau ynglŷn â gofal gwrdd â ni wyneb yn wyneb, a gobeithio gweithio gyda ni i wneud gwelliannau. Bydd gweithredwyr ac uwch glinigwyr yno i wrando ar bryderon pobl a'u trafod. Bydd Cyngor Iechyd Cymuned ABM hefyd yn bresennol i gynnig cyngor annibynnol ar weithdrefnau cwyno.

Dywedodd y Prif Weithredwr, Paul Roberts, er bod y rhan fwyaf o'r gofal yn ysbytai PABM o safon uchel, mae angen gwneud rhagor, a bod gwrando ar gleifion, eu teuluoedd a'u gofalcwyr yn hanfodol. Esboniodd:

"Rydyn ni am gwrdd â chleifion, perthnasau a gofalcwyr sydd â phryderon difrifol ynghylch gofal ac sy'n teimlo nad ydyn nhw wedi cael yr atebion sydd eu hangen arnyn nhw. Byddwn ni'n gwrando a dysgu oddi wrthyn nhw, a gobeithio bydd rhai hefyd yn cytuno i weithio gyda ni i wneud newidiadau. Bydd persbectifau'r cleifion a'r teuluoedd wrth wraidd y gwelliannau."

Bydd y clinigau pryderon cyntaf yn cael eu cynnal yn **Ysbyty Tywysoges Cymru** ym Mhen-y-bont ar Ogwr rhwng **5pm a 7.30pm** ar y dyddiadau canlynol:

Dydd Llun, 24 Chwefror 2014, a Dydd Iau, 27 Chwefror 2014
Dydd Mawrth, 4 Mawrth 2014, a Dydd Mercher 5 Mawrth 2014



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Os hoffech ddod, cysylltwch â ni i drefnu apwyntiad. Gallwch ffonio hefyd (oriau swyddfa) 01656 754194. Neu, anfonwch e-bost ABM.chiefexec@wales.nhs.uk

Byddwn yn cyhoeddi clinigau eraill mewn ysbytai PABM eraill cyn bo hir.



Marie Curie Cancer Care provides high quality nursing, totally free, to give terminally ill people the choice of dying at home, supported by their families



The GEM is making a donation to Marie Curie Cancer Care as a result of this advertisement feature



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**Councillor
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As Mayor of the Vale of
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pleasure to support
**Marie Curie Cancer Care
Daffodil Campaign**



**Y Cyngorydd
Margaret Wilkinson**
Fel Maer Cyngor Bro Morgannwg
mae'n bleser mawr gennyl gefnogi
**Ymgyrch Cennin Pedr Gofal
Canser Marie Curie**

MARIE CURIE Cancer Care is appealing for people in the Vale of Glamorgan to donate an hour of their time this February and March to collect for the charity's annual Great Daffodil Appeal.

The appeal is Marie Curie's biggest fundraiser, which encourages everyone to give a donation and wear a daffodil pin in February and March.

The charity needs volunteer collectors to encourage people in the local community to wear a that daffodil pin and make that donation.

The money raised will help Marie Curie Nurses provide more free care to local people with terminal illnesses in their own homes and in the local Marie Curie Hospice.

Helen Mulhern, community fundraiser for Marie Curie Cancer Care, explained: "We need hundreds of people from all over south Wales to help with our collections this February and March.

"Donating just one or two hours of your time to the appeal will allow Marie Curie nurses provide more free care to terminally ill people and their families at the time when they most need support."

Marie Curie runs nine hospices nationwide and is a leader in research into the best ways of caring for people with terminal illness.

In addition to this, the charity designs and advises on end of life services and works to ensure that the best possible care and patient choice is at the heart of commissioning end of life care across the United Kingdom.

All Marie Curie services are completely free of charge. Around 70 per cent of the charity's income comes from donations with the balance of funds coming from the NHS.

To volunteer to collect for Marie Curie Cancer Care and support the Great Daffodil Appeal call the fundraising office on 02920 426068 or visit the website at: www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil; like Marie Curie at: www.facebook.com/mariecurieuk.

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'ALL WE NEED IS A COUPLE OF HOURS OF YOUR TIME'

Charity needs local volunteers to help the Daffodil Appeal



Can YOU help out Marie Curie?

IAM appealing to your readers to volunteer for Marie Curie Cancer Care's Great Daffodil Appeal, and help people with terminal illnesses in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan get the care they need.

We're looking for people who can donate an hour or two of their time to collect for Marie Curie by simply giving out daffodil pins in return for donations. We have a street collection in Barry Town Centre from Saturday February 22 to Saturday March 1, and we need as many volunteers as possible to help. We also have lots of other collections in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan if you are unable to collect at

Barry Town Centre.

Marie Curie Nurses provide free care to people with terminal illnesses at the Marie Curie Hospice, Cardiff and the Vale. To ensure we can continue to provide this vital care we need people to help make this year's Great Daffodil Appeal a great success.

If you're able to donate a few hours to help someone in their final hours then please contact me on 02920 426068 or email Georgina.Burke@mariecurie.org.uk.

Thank you for your support.

GEORGINA BURKE,
(Community Fundraiser, Marie Curie Hospice, Cardiff and the Vale).

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CLAIRE
CURTIS**
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Out and About with The GEM

What's On IN BRIEF

Welsh Hearts free training
WELSH Hearts are holding a FREE training session for two hours on Monday, February 17 at The King's Cup pub, The Square, St Athan from 7pm - 9pm.

To book a place contact 02920 786521 or email fundraising@welsh-hearts.org.

Local PACT meetings
CASTLELAND PACT, The Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, February 17 at 7pm.

LLANDOUGH PACT, The Royal British Legion, Penlan Road, Llandough, February 17 at 7pm.

Coffee and chat meeting, The Blue Anchor, East Aberthaw near Rhose on February 25, 11am.

Coffee and chat meeting, The Red Lion, Bonvilston on February 25, at 11am.

Women's arts exhibition
THE Women's Arts Association is celebrating International Women's Day on March 8 at Art Central gallery in Barry, with an exhibition of art works and a beginner's writing workshop. On Saturday,

February 15, Bristol-based writer Meg Kingston will be presenting a 'read, write, edit' workshop at the gallery from 1.30pm. Tickets cost £4 which includes a drink and cake.

The Women's Arts exhibition will be at Art Central, Town Hall, King Square, Barry CF63 4RW from February 17 - March 22, from 10am - 4pm.

For more information about the 'read, write, edit' workshop, Women's Arts Association exhibition, or Art Central Gallery, contact 01446 422428. Or visit www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk - Enjoy Arts and Culture.

NHS breast screening
THE Breast Test Wales mobile screening unit will be at the Memorial Hall, Barry, from March 3 to the end of May.

Women who are aged over 70 will not automatically be invited for breast screening, but can request an appointment by telephoning Breast Test Wales on 029 2039 7222.

For more information, contact your GP practice or telephone Breast Test Wales on 029 2039 7222.

'Heritage museum needs our support'

WRITE in support of the Glamorgan Wartime Heritage Museum based in Barry, at the Barry Island Railway Station venue.

The museum is asking to use the existing tourist information centre on the island - and this would be an ideal site, if it is available.

But it is not the only building in Barry standing empty. A few yards away from the museum is the old pumping station; restored at public expense, this building has been standing empty since the work was completed.

This year marks the centenary of the Great War and during the coming months the Heritage Museum will no doubt play a large part in commemorative events. Ade Pitman and her team of volunteers have created a badly-needed museum here in Barry. It falls to the council, and all of us, to give them all the support we can.

David Lloyd, Barry.



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McConaughey shines in Dallas Buyers Club

THERE was a troubling spell, around 2009, where the promise of Matthew McConaughey's acting career was on the precipice of disappearing.

Phoning in his laconic charm to serve weak romantic 'comedies' like *Ghosts Of Girlfriends Past* and *Failure To Launch*, and perfunctory action fare like *Fools Gold* and *Sahara*, McConaughey seemed destined to forever be filled under failing to live up to his talents.

But then he hit a hot streak, starting with 2011's *The Lincoln Lawyer*, which has shown little signs of stopping. He has been Oscar nominated for his latest performance in *Dallas Buyers Club*.

Based on a true story, McConaughey plays Ron Woodruff, a man who is diagnosed with AIDS. Stunned at the battle, and costs, of medication, Woodruff takes the medication into his own hands, travelling over the border to Mexico, in order to help himself, and other sufferers - but Woodruff's plans are constantly under the gaze of those who aren't keen on his 'Robin Hood' mentality...

While Oscar season often sees true-life stories come to the fore, the tale of Ron Woodruff is

certainly one that deserves to be told, especially seeing as a man whose later life was a battle on behalf of those unfortunate to be diagnosed with a life-threatening illness, came from such a low-key background.

There is more than a hint of Robin Hood about the character of Woodruff - and indeed, screenwriters Melissa Wallack and Craig Borten amp up the narrative drive of this being a man battling against 'the man', or larger elements that are unable or unwilling to do what should be the right thing.

But more than that, *Dallas Buyers Club* is a film about a man whose life change comes as a knock-on effect of his brush with mortality - whose desire to do good comes from, at its core, the urge to help himself.

While Woodruff is deservedly celebrated for what he achieved, the film rarely depicts its protagonist as the hero, instead focusing on the humanity of his character and how he develops into someone attempting to battle the system.

With his desperately slim frame (having lost a large amount of weight for the role) Matthew McConaughey may be ticking the Oscar checklist; but this is a performance that is gritty, real and wonderfully engaging. There's no



by GARETH JAMIESON
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award-chasing here from the actor, whose fine run of form just keeps coming.

His natural charisma comes to the fore, but as Woodruff battles the perceptions of the disease he's been diagnosed with (face masks and people being afraid of his spit just two examples); and he starts to realise the severity of the hand he's been dealt with, the surface bluster blows away and McConaughey's performance captures the fragility of the situation achingly well.

While the rest of the cast all deliver good performances, Jared Leto is easily the pick of the bunch as transgender Rayon, a character who falls into Woodruff's life but whose plight and situation make him the perfect foil as they form an odd couple alliance.

Leto is a very underrated actor, but deserves the plaudits he's been receiving here, for the performance is one of strength and courage in saddening circumstance that refuses to paint the character as a victim. Instead, Leto is as vivid

and full of life as can be, his mortality something that lingers subtly in the background.

Jean-Marc Vallee's direction is beautifully low-key, focusing on the gritty trailer trash Woodruff and company emanate from, the location becoming a character in itself as the parched visuals marry perfectly with the subject material.

He infuses the material with moments of wonder and quiet emotion, rather than plug too deeply into melodrama, Vallee concentrating on life rather than death, lending the film a wonderful degree of warmth amidst the physical and legal battles.

With a sense of gallows humour, and the focus on the indefatigable human spirit, there is much to like and admire about *Dallas Buyers Club*. Its sentiment isn't cheap, its warmth is hard-earned - but it makes you feel, and delivers plenty of substance in telling a most beguiling, and uplifting story.

VERDICT - A wonderfully engaging film, *Dallas Buyers Club* houses yet another superb turn by Matthew McConaughey and a surprisingly robust, yet tender, support role from Jared Leto. Yet beneath the performances is a story deftly told, full of emotion and fire, but without offering easy platitudes, wonderfully directed by Jean-Marc Vallee; a superb piece of filmmaking.

Highly recommended. SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: Erin Brockovich (2000), Milk (2008)

The Billy Fury phenomenon

ONE of the best-selling recording artists of the 1960s, Billy Fury enjoyed a string of hit singles totalling a remarkable 332 weeks in the British charts.

Health problems since childhood led to the singer's untimely death on January 28, 1983, but it is reassuring to know that his name and music is not forgotten. The Billy Fury Years is quite simply 'The Ultimate Billy Fury show to ever hit the stage'.

Hailed as "the best Fury since Fury", Michael King and his talented group of musicians take a journey through the musical career of Britain's best loved rock 'n roll legend.

The two-hour show is filled with Billy Fury's greatest hits, delivered live in true Fury style.

Billy Fury was born Ronald William Wycherley, in Liverpool on April 17, 1940. He was an internationally successful British pop singer from the late 1950s to

the early 1960s, and remained an active songwriter until the 1980s. Rheumatic fever, which damaged his heart, contributed to his death in 1983.

In the 1960s, Fury had more Decca hits than any other artist, including The Rolling Stones. He equalled The Beatles' record of 24 hits and spent a total of 332 weeks on the UK charts.



Valeways walks

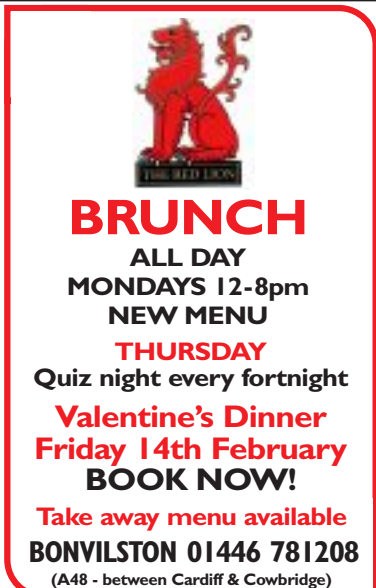
ON Tuesday, February 18 at 1.30pm, 'Lakes and countryside', starting at Cosmeston Country Park visitor centre.

Also on February 18 at 2pm, the coffee shop strollers meet at Cosmeston Country Park visitor centre.

On Wednesday, February 19 at 10.30am, the coffee shop strollers meet at Romilly Cafe, Cold Knap, Barry.

On Thursday, February 20 at 10.30am, the coffee shop strollers meet at Rhose railway station car park.

On Sunday, February 23, 10yb, 'Siambir Gladdu Tinkinswood' yn Red Lion maes parcio, St Nicholas.



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Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit
Our lucky winning reader, chosen at random wins a £25 prize voucher to spend with any advertiser in last week's GEM.
Our lucky winner has chosen to spend their prize with...
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MAKING YOUR HOUSE A HOME



MAKING YOUR HOUSE A HOME

TIPS on how we can protect our plants from the worst of the weather - plus, find out what else needs doing in the garden this week.

by HANNAH STEPHENSON
WHILE the incessant rain may have left gardeners' water butts overflowing, it has also inevitably claimed its share of casualties.

Waterlogged plants, nutrients leached from the soil and pest and disease problems can all result from consistently wet conditions, and those gardeners with poor drainage systems are likely to be the hardest hit.

When soil is waterlogged, plants literally drown. Water fills all the air spaces between the soil particles and this prevents oxygen from reaching the roots.

In turn, this causes the soil to stagnate and prevents root growth.

If plants look a bit sickly after a week or two of solid rain, the minerals may have been washed away. Restore the vigour of plants by giving them a dose of liquid seaweed fertiliser.

"It's absolutely vital that one doesn't walk on the soil when it's this wet because you compact it and destroy its structure.

"Don't dig it or dis-

turb it but leave it to its own devices until the tide goes out," says Guy Barter, head of RHS advisory service.

Plants likely to be worst affected include those from dry climates such as lavender and rosemary, while lawns can also suffer as a result of excessively wet weather, he notes.

Don't mow the lawn in wet weather or even walk on it, as the pressure can cause structural damage, especially to those grown from seed in spring. Most established lawns can cope with excessive rainfall.

Mr Barter advises gardeners to shelter pots of lavender and other container plants by a wall, or even put waterlogged pots on their side for a few days to allow them to drain a little. You may need to repot them in the spring, as the compost may be spent.

However, the wet weather isn't all doom and gloom for gardeners.

"Paradoxically, lawns will be growing in these temperatures," points out Guy Barter.

"In the vegetable garden, vegetables will still be growing, so leeks will thrive and cabbages will still be swelling slowly through this weather. By April, many things will have come good."

Bulbs shouldn't be affected by the continuous rainfall either, he says.

"They are really good at surviving this sort of thing. Snowdrops and daffodils in particular are excellent at adapting. Bulbs are generally very tolerant of wet soil.

"We might even get a better show of bulbs because in conditions like this they will be photosynthesising in the increased light as the year progresses."

Herbaceous perennials renew a large part of their root system annually, so they can recover from soggy conditions.

Perennials also have shallow root systems so they can flourish in situations with a high water table.

Most, including those such as hardy geraniums and autumn-flowing asters, that do not

normally live in wet environments can cope well with wet conditions.

Plants with big, lush green leaves thrive in really wet weather. Rodgersias, rheum (ornamental rhubarb) and hostas are well-known moisture lovers. Conversely, avoid anything with small, leathery or grey leaves.

Alpines, particularly the succulent ones or those with hairy leaves such as sedums and some sempervivums (houseleeks), are vulnerable to wet weather, so if you haven't yet covered them with cloches, do so before it's too late.

Don't plant bare-root shrubs such as roses until the soil has dried out a little, Barter advises.

"Gardeners will have rose bushes and trees and fruit bushes and turf ready to go out and they must keep that protected, because it will be a rush trying to get everything planted when the soil finally dries up in February, March or even April. Gardeners need to keep their new

plants in good condition ready for the happy day when they can put them out," he says.

Anyone who has bought a bare-root plant should make sure the roots don't dry out in the meantime, he urges. "Take it out of the packaging and pot it up or wrap it in wet newspaper or straw, put a plastic bag over the roots and leave it in a shed ready to go out in its final position later on."

While fruit trees love the moisture, the relatively warm weather may lead to earlier blossom, not a good thing in our climate, because of the late frosts we so often suffer.

Gardeners who want to avoid too many casualties in future years may consider building raised beds, improving soil drainage and planting species which are happy in wet weather.

It may be worth thinking about creating a bog garden too, which has the added bonus of attracting wildlife - plant irises, carex, gunnera, primulas, hostas, rheum and rodgersia.

work at this time of year because the slugs aren't moving enough to find them."

Some diseases such as leaf spots persist on plants which are in leaf during wet weather. If you find outbreaks, prune out infected material.

Lastly, as the rain will have washed many of the nutrients out of the soil, give it a pick-me-up with a fertiliser rich in potassium, such as sulphate of potash or rose fertiliser, and your plants should come through the torrent of rain with few problems.

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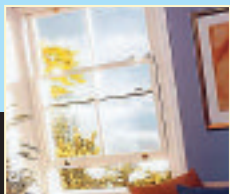
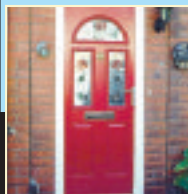
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'USE TREES TO COMBAT FLOODS'

says the Woodland Trust (Coed Cadw)

ANGHARAD EVANS of the Woodland Trust (Coed Cadw) last week handed over a petition bearing 2,700 names, calling on the Assembly and the Welsh Government to support the planting of 10 million trees across Wales, in places where they will do most to reduce flood risk.

The names were collected online and at various shows and events last year. To coincide with this, the Trust is also publishing a major report, 'Holding back the waters', showing the huge potential for the Welsh Government and its new environmental

body Natural Resources Wales, to use woodlands and trees as an effective, and cost effective, means of reducing flood risk to some of the 357,000 properties in Wales, a sixth of the building stock, that are currently at risk from flooding – alongside more traditional hard engineering flood defences where appropriate.

Jerry Langford,

Wales director of the Woodland Trust said: "I'm delighted to announce that we in the Woodland Trust are ready to put our money where our mouth is and provide £20,000 towards the cost of a scheme, or schemes, in Wales, which can help demonstrate the effectiveness of using trees to reduce flood risk and improve water quality."

MEET BART, DAI, HONEY AND DUSTY!

TO celebrate national nest box week (February 14 – 21) rangers will be holding a bird box-making session at the Forest Lodge, Porthkerry Country Park, on February 15, and at Cosmeston on February 16.

Sessions at both venues will be run between 11am and 2pm. Owls4U will also be on site to display and talk about their rescued owls Bart, Dai, Honey and Dusty. There is no charge for the owl display; however, Owls4U would be grateful for any donations on the day.

It will cost £4 to make your own box and you can also buy pre-constructed boxes for £5 each.

GIVE YOUR HOME A NEW LOOK BY DECLUTTERING!

Why wait until spring for a clear-out? Decluttering with some clever storage solutions could bring calm and harmony into your home, says **GABRIELLE FAGAN**.

It's not unusual at this time of year to feel as though your possessions are winning the space war and you're being squeezed out.

But of all the aspirational (if unrealistic) goals we set ourselves, decluttering and getting your house organised is, arguably, the most achievable.

Nothing acts more like a tonic for the hungover soul than a jolly good tidy," says Barbara Genda, founder and principal designer at Barbara Genda Bespoke Furniture.

"Research suggests that clutter and mess causes us untold stress. Stuffed cupboards, dishevelled drawers, haphazardly strewn and displaced possessions without a designated 'living' space all culminate into a loud, unrelenting visual 'noise' that can make us feel boxed-in, overwhelmed and even anxious."

Luckily, there are a multitude

of solutions for organising mess – particularly if you're a natural hoarder – from stackable boxes to sophisticated storage systems.

"Pack all of that mess away and immediately you'll discern the positive effects."

"You'll have a calmer environment in which you can relax, be productive and at the very least, think straight," she says.

Things you can do

Under-stairs sort-out

"Under the stairs is the definitive dumping ground for assorted, unused odds and ends," says Genda.

"Often, you can't seem to open the door without a golf bag spilling heavy clubs onto your feet, or a sea of shoes tumbling out."

Top tip: As a short-term solution, put hooks inside the cupboard door for hanging up bags and get transparent boxes for larger items, so they stay dust free and you can view contents without having to rummage.

Free-up living space

"Decluttering isn't about throwing everything away," says Simon Glanville, managing director of storage specialists, Store.

"It's about losing what's use-

less and ugly in order to have space for things that are useful and beautiful. But it's easy to feel overwhelmed and keep putting off that clear-up," he adds.

"Start with one single drawer or shelf at a time. Set a timer for 20 minutes and stop when the alarm goes off."

"Always tidy up first thing in the morning, so once the chore is done, you're free to enjoy the rest of your day."

Top tip: Always de-clutter before buying new storage, otherwise you won't know the right solution for your needs.

Explore under-used spaces, like landings, and consider boarding a loft so you can store seasonal items.

Book lovers

"Books can look beautiful when displayed properly so avoid stacking them too deep, or leaving them in piles everywhere," says Marianne Shillingford, creative director and head of the design service at Dulux.

"You can work on the principle that if you haven't looked at individual titles in a couple of years, you're probably unlikely to read them again, and some could be consigned to a charity shop."

"Store books so you can find

them easily – alphabetically, by genre or those you've recently read. Look for different ways to display them; shelves over and around doorways look particularly effective."

Top tip: Paint an old bookcase, or look on eBay, Freecycle or local charity shops for second hand ones and do a make over. Fashionable, low mid-century sideboards work well too.

Uncork a solution

Those who take their wine seriously realise the need to store bottles correctly, while even if you have half a dozen bottles kept aside they can take up room.

A recent survey by self storage service, LoveSpace, found around 20 per cent of Britons have wine storage on their wish-list, and nearly 18 per cent want a mini-bar.

"Streamlining your interior to make the best use of your space will work wonders on a room," says Claire Hornby, creative stylist at Barker & Stonehouse.

"A crate, or a bespoke wine cupboard if you have room, will avoid breakages and allow you to manage a growing collection which can gather dust and look unattractive if it's just standing on a shelf or cupboard surface."

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COMPANIES SET HIGH STANDARDS IN LOCAL BUILDING EXCELLENCE



ABOVE: Phil Webbley of WW Building was commended, and his award was collected from the Vale Mayor, Coun Margaret Wilkinson, by Charles Hunter, principal building control office, and Jan Irving of The Glamorgan GEM.



ABOVE: Taylor Wimpey were winners of the best housing over eight dwellings section. Site manger Bridget Penman is pictured with Nina Chivers of Nina Estate Agents.

LEFT: Westgate Building Services were commended and a representative is pictured with Coun Fred Johnson and Nina Chivers.

RIGHT: WJ James were the winners of the best conversion category. Pictured (left to right) are Coun Lis Burnett, architect Richard Crockett, and Mr Cooper of WJ James, and Mr Thomas.



ABOVE: Vale Mayor, Margaret Wilkinson, and Jan Irving of The GEM (on right) with Mr and Mrs Smith, winners of the best extension category.



THE eleventh Vale of Glamorgan Council Building Control Group 'Building Excellence' awards were presented at the Mount Sorrel Hotel, Barry, on January 31.

The evening was attended by Coun Lis Burnett, cabinet member for regeneration, innovation and planning and transportation, Coun Fred Johnson, chairman of the planning committee and the Mayor of the Vale, Coun Margaret Wilkinson.

Also present were Rob Thomas, the director of development services for the council, and the Building Control team, together with the sponsors of the event, Mount Sorrel Hotel, Jan Irving of the Glamorgan GEM, Nina and Rob of Nina Estate Agents, Paul and Helen Thomas of ACD Recycling and Skip Hire, and GreenBuild Consult.

The evening was hosted by Marcus Goldsworthy, the operational manager for development and building control at the Vale Council.

Mr Goldsworthy remarked: "The nominations in every category were of the very highest quality and I congratulate all the winners, who will now have the chance to compete against the winners from other councils in south Wales in the 'South Wales Building Excellence' awards 2014 at the Vale of Glamorgan Hotel and Spa Resort, Hensol, on April 25, hosted by Owen Money.

"I am also hopeful that some of these schemes will go forward to the 'Building Excellence' award national finals, in London in November, especially as we were lucky enough to have a national winner in 2013.

"The awards have shown the quality of work undertaken throughout the Vale, and we are proud to be rewarding and encouraging quality in the construction industry.

Our thanks must also go out to the sponsors, who have enabled the event to be firmly placed in the annual diary."

The evening also raised a massive £500 on the night for MacMillan Cancer Group.

Highly Commended and the award winners who will go forward to the South Wales event are:

Extension/alteration to a dwelling
Steve Smith for the extension and renovations at 7 Smithies Avenue, Sully

Best Conversion
W. J. James & Sons, for the barn conversion to holiday lets, at Sutton Farm

Best Housing over eight dwellings
Taylor Wimpey Developments South Wales for the development at Pencoeindre, Barry.

Best Craftsmanship
SJ Builders for various sites

Best Social Housing Development
Green Hill Construction for the development at Merthyr Street, Barry

Best Partnership Scheme
Newydd Housing Association with Tony King Architects

The Vale Council said it wished all of the above schemes good luck in progressing to the National Awards Finals.



ABOVE: Maria Webber accepted the award for Wayne Moore Construction and architect Christian Le Guilcher who were both commended.



ABOVE: Ray Baker Architects were commended, and their representative is pictured with Coun Lis Burnett and Mr Thomas of ACD Recycling and Skip Hire.



ABOVE: Gareth Davies of Greenbuild Consult (left) with John Webb of JCW Developments - commended in the awards - and Charles Hunter (right).



ABOVE: Representatives of Neil Smith and Co, who were commended.



ABOVE: Steve James of SJ Builders, winner of the best craftsmanship award, with Charles Hunter.



LEFT (left to right): Gareth Davies; a representative of Gibbon Brothers (commended); Richard Crockett (architect).



LEFT: Rob Thomas (left) and the Mayor with representatives of Green Hill Construction, winners of the best social housing development.

Penarth Computer Club – more hints and tips

I PREVIOUSLY noted that the third golden rule of using computers is 'keep learning'; our talk showed 10 useful things new users could benefit from learning (and long-standing users revisiting). There are many more tips, of course, and we will look at more as we go.

So far, we have aimed at enabling users to get things done. Once the basics are mastered and we can actually do something useful, the novelty wears off a little and we notice the little niggles of repeated tasks and interruptions and delays. Something can be done about that.

For example, breaking off from your work need not be a big bother.

For short or sudden breaks, I offered the tip that holding down the Windows key and pressing L (Win+L) will instantly show only a log-on window that requires a password.

Your work is not exposed. When you re-start, entering your password will return you to the place where you left off and all ready to continue.

For longer interruptions, you can get the same service. Instead of closing any files or applications, simply select the Hibernate option instead of Shut Down. Once the computer has hibernated it can be switched off completely and still keep everything ready to resume once it is switched on and the password entered. All the applications and documents that were open when it hibernated will be reopened exactly as they were previously and you can resume precisely where you left off.

When you get used to the construction of a document or a spreadsheet, it is worth applying some formatting for emphasis. This could be putting a paragraph in a different font, or colour or *italics*, or **emboldened** or underlined or a different size – or any combination of them. You might want to apply special formats or borders to a table or to cells in a spreadsheet. The process might take a bit of time to get the effect required and might involve several settings applied to the same text or object.

But what if you decide you would like to repeat the exercise in several places? The last thing you fancy doing is repeating all the work you did to set up the special appearance. You don't have to work so hard.

Simply click on any piece of the already-formatted text; click on the Format Painter button on the standard toolbar (it shows a paintbrush) and then highlight the text you want to 'paint'.

That text instantly takes on all the attributes of the original selection. The Format Painter is automatically cancelled.

If you want to repeat the process several times, double-click on Format Painter and it will paint each selection. Clicking Format Painter again cancels it.

Format Painter is a wonderful labour-saving button especially with Autosaves, but they deserve their own treatment.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday, February 25 at All Saints Lesser Hall, Victoria Square, Penarth, at 7.30pm for 8pm. Let's look at the stars with Mike J. Visitors always welcome. See penarthcomputerclub.co.uk.

Howard Desmond

NEW EXHIBITS ARRIVE AT BARRY TOURIST RAILWAY

THIS month, there have been new arrivals at Barry Tourist Railway – and one popular exhibit has returned home.

The unique steam railcar was taken back to its home at Churnet Valley Railway in Staffordshire, having been at Barry since last August.

Many visitors enjoyed rides along the lines at Barry and especially with Father Christmas last year. Last Friday (February 7) two additions to the collection of motive power arrived.

A former yellow maintenance unit from the Severn Tunnel, and a diesel unit from the Canton depot in Cardiff both arrived by road.

Report and photographs by Mike Wilcock.



ABOVE: A maintenance unit has arrived from the Severn Tunnel.



ABOVE: The steam railcar, which has now returned to Staffordshire.

Tragic legend behind the feast of St Valentine

FEBRUARY is the second month of the year on the Julian and Gregorian calendars, and it acquired its name from the Latin word februa – purification, superlatively making it a Roman month.

Along with January, February was not on the original datebook, but was added to the calendar by Numa Pompilius around 713BC.

In Welsh, the month of February is known as Y Mis Bach, which means little month as it is the only one to have 28 days. Chewfor is the equivalent in Welsh for this dreary time of year, as it is the shortest month except for leap year – which extends it to 29 every four years.

Around 400 years ago, February was called Feverell, and 100 years later it changed to Februer. February, as we spell it today, only came into existence around 100 years ago.

Sol-monarth was an Old English term for February which means mud month, as the weather is gloomy at this time of year. It is meteorologically the third and final month of the winter season.

Sol-monarth (cake month) was an ancient event where cakes were offered to the gods. It was also known as sprout and kale monarth, as planted cabbage and kale would begin to sprout.

The birthstone of February is the amethyst, its flowers the violet and common primrose and zodiac signs Aquarius (until 18th) and Pisces.

The Christian festival of Candlemas (festival of lights) is celebrated on the second day of the month. This was because during ancient times, the Christmas festival lasted for 40 days – until the second day in February.

It was a day when all candles to be used in churches for the year ahead would be lit and blessed, in the belief that the flames would protect its people against plague, illness and famine.

In ancient times, it was known as the Feast of Lights, in celebration of the increasing strength of the sun as winter gives way to spring.

Superstitious rituals were performed from 12 to 14 as it was believed that these dates were borrowed from January. If they were stormy days, the weather for the year ahead would be good; whereas if fine weather prevailed the climate would be unpleasant.

The renowned snow-drop begins to appear

around landscapes in February. This beautiful white flower is believed to have evolved when Adam and Eve were expelled from The Garden of Eden. This was because an angel appeared to give Eve hope and guidance.

In the hope of banishing cold winters, the angel transformed snowflakes into flowers, proving that winter does eventually end and that spring is around the corner.

This can be seen in the old rhyme: 'The snowdrop, in purest white array, first rears its head on Candlemas day'.

On February 8, 1855, the people of our country were petrified one morning to discover peculiar footprints in the snow in the shape of a cloven hoof. Could they have been terrified because this was deemed as a sign that the devil had visited earth and could cast his spell of evil amongst humankind?

The most famous date in February is the 14th, the feast of St Valentine, which is celebrated in many countries around the world.

There are a few variations as to who St Valentine actually was; but the most likely was in honour of the individual who took it upon himself to challenge a Roman Emperor who banned soldiers from marrying during the third century.

He became a campaigner for the soldiers, but was executed for his outspokenness in 469AD. Pope Gelasius declared this date in honour of St Valentine.

Another legend states that St Valentine was executed for his Christian beliefs and before he died, he penned a note to his lover saying 'From Your Valentine'.

The day became associated with romance some time in the Middle Ages.

Shakespeare's quote from his tragic play Romeo and Juliet seems to celebrate love in an adoring fashion:

'Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs; being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes; being vex'd a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears: what is it else? a madness most discreet, A choking gall and a

preserving sweet.'

The Romans and Celts observed February as the start of the spring season.

Shrove Tuesday is a tradition hailing the day before Lent, with the fasting custom marking 40 days before Easter.

Also known as Mischief Day, it was a time when church bells would ring out, a game of football was played by all and feasting and revelry were celebrated. Shrove Tuesday 2014 falls on March 4.

Ash Wednesday was named after the ash tree when schoolchildren would carry a piece of twig in their pocket for luck. Failure to carry out this tradition would result in their feet being trodden on.

The Friday following Ash Wednesday was once called Kissing Friday. It was a day when schoolboys were allowed to kiss girls without fear of punishment. This custom lasted until the 1940s, when the war years wilted it away.

But fact or fiction? Only you can decide ...

Hayley Williams
hayley.williams550@yahoo.com



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Tory councillors launch anti-merger petition

THE leader of the Vale of Glamorgan Conservative Group has launched a petition rejecting a suggested merger of the local authority with neighbouring Cardiff.

It follows the publishing of a report commissioned by the Welsh Government which recommended the merger as part of controversial plans to reduce the number of local authorities in Wales.

The petition is available online at - <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/handsoffthevale>.

Conservative group leader, Coun John Thomas, said: "When the Williams Commission was established we were keen to look with an open mind at what proposals were brought forward.

"The cost of politics does need to be reduced and public services must be delivered efficiently and effectively in the best possible way to meet the needs of local residents.

"However, in the case of the Vale, the Conservative council group are clear that we do not believe a merger with Cardiff would be in the best interests of residents. The Vale is a self-sufficient local authority which, broadly speaking, delivers excellent services to its residents.

"While mergers may be appropriate for some councils in certain cases, the Vale does not habitually under-perform and has never been in danger of slipping into 'special measures' like some other authorities.

"We are clear that there is no local need or desire to take the decision-making process away from locally-elected and accountable councillors."

Coun Thomas added: "Naturally, it is a matter for other local parties to make their own views clear on the findings of this report, but I sincerely hope that we get broad support for this petition, which strongly rejects any Welsh Government moves to merge the Vale with Cardiff."

Councillor helps raise funds to boost the kitty!



ABOVE: Coun Ian Hibble, with a furry friend, hands over a cheque to the Cats Adoption Centre. Photo by Mandy Thomas; www.mandythomasphotography.co.uk.

CAT-LOVING Coun Ian Hibble visited Bridgend Adoption Centre to hand over a cheque on behalf of Brackla Community Council for £223.13, after making Cats Protection one of his charities of the year.

Sue Dobbs, centre manager, said: "We are a very busy adoption centre and achieve incredible results finding loving homes for more than 1,250 cats and kittens every year.

"However, we constantly need to raise additional funds to ensure we maintain the highest standards of care of all our cats.

"We are very grateful to Coun Ian Hibble for raising money on our behalf. If we didn't receive such wonderful support from our local community, so many more cats would remain needlessly homeless," she added.

The money was raised during events in Brackla including a fun day and firework display. The events were organised and run by the people of Brackla.

Coun Hibble said: "My own cat Patrick came from Cats Protection; it is a pleasure to be able to support this vital charity as one of my charities as chair of Brackla Community Centre, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the community of Brackla for their generous support."

Bridgend adoption centre holds over 200 cats and kittens and currently has over 80 cats ready for adoption.

To offer a kitty a home, please telephone 01656 724396 or visit: bridgend.cat.org.uk

For further information, please contact Sue Dobbs on 01656 726621 or email: bridgend.manager@cat.s.org.uk

News in and out of the classroom at Barry Comprehensive School



ABOVE: Students from 7ANB with Cathy and Mojo in the school's learning resource centre.



ABOVE: Mr Fitzpatrick and Mr Jones with Nicholas displaying his award for excellence.

Engineering ace

B A R R Y Comprehensive School's Faculty of Technology has congratulated Nicholas Sherrin on receiving the South Wales Institute of Engineers Award for Excellence.

Nicholas was an outstanding GCSE pupil and has chosen to continue his studies in the Barry Sixth Form.

Meet the author

LAST term, year-7 students were invited to Barry library to meet authors Michelle Briscoe and Cathy Farr.

Each form class travelled down to the library where they met the author and were treated to a reading from their novel.

Students were given the chance to ask questions and find out what inspired both authors to

write their novels. They also had the opportunity to purchase a novel and have it signed by the author.

Cathy Farr, author of fantasy adventures *Moon Chase* and *Moon Crossing*, spoke to the pupils about her books and about how she became a writer. Some students were lucky enough to meet the inspiration behind her books – her Irish Wolfhound, Mojo!

Barry Library also promoted some of the great facilities they have for young people and encouraged pupils to join the library if they hadn't already.

The students thoroughly enjoyed the trip and we look forward to visiting the library again in the future.

7ANB had missed out on seeing Cathy and Mojo at Barry Library, so they made a special visit to the school, much to the delight of students and staff. AC

Dinas coffee morning

RESIDENTS are invited to a free coffee morning with local councillors this Saturday, February 15 in the Lee Hall, Britway Road, Dinas Powys starting at 11am.

This is an opportunity to raise matters of concern to people in Dinas Powys. Alternatively, local Plaid Councillors can be contacted directly - Chris Franks (07725 497 423), Val Hartrey (02920 513274), Keith Hatton (07749 825 751) and Chris Williams (02920 514166).

There are many hot topics to discuss affecting the community – ranging from the Cross Common Bridge, traffic issues and pressures on the Vale Council budget to the everyday issues such as road repairs. All are welcome.

'Centurions, prepare for the cricket nets!'

SULLY Centurions Cricket Club will be starting their indoor nets at 8.30pm on Thursday, February 20 at the Sports Centre, Colcot Road, Barry.

New members are always welcome, no matter what standard you play at.

Young entrepreneurs are set to put business skills to the test in Cardiff...

STUDENTS from Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg will be competing to be crowned the Welsh winners of this

year's Coca-Cola Enterprises Real Business Challenge (RBC).

The challenge is a national enterprise initiative for year-10 stu-

dents. It has been running in Wales since 2009. The programme is linked to the curriculum and challenges students to work in teams to tackle a business task set by the organisers.

Over 45 schools from across Wales entered the enterprise-themed competition this year, with ten chosen to battle it out in the Wales final at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff today, Thursday, February 13.

The winner will represent Wales in the Great Britain final in London on March 25.

Vale AM Jane Hutt said: "Well done, Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg, who have clearly demonstrated considerable business acumen and initiative to have made it this far in the challenge. Good luck!"

TRAINER TIM'S ON A PANEL

ABERTHIN trainer Tim Vaughan and top National Hunt jockey Richard Johnson will be joining racecourse commentator Tony Ennis at a charity Cheltenham Festival preview evening at 7.30pm on Monday, March 3, at Ton Pentre Football Club in the Rhondda Valley.

All money raised will go to the Riding School For The Disabled.

Admission is £10 and tickets can be obtained from the event organiser, Keven Moon, on 07506952368.

Honest finder returned ring

READING last week's GEM about Georgia Thomas' appeal for the return of her handbag has made me put pen to paper to relate an incident that happened to me.

On Thursday, February 6, I shopped at Lidl in Barry and on my return home, discovered that my signet ring was not on my hand.

On Friday morning, I returned to Lidl to enquire if a ring had been found. I suspected

LETTER

that in taking my gloves off while shopping, the ring could have slipped off my finger.

To my great joy and relief, an assistant went to look and returned with my ring. Some kind soul had discovered it and handed it in to a member of the staff.

I would very much like to thank the person that handed it in, and I do hope that Georgia Thomas will be as lucky as me.

A Hughes, Penarth.

Workshops for media hopefuls

A SERIES of workshops co-ordinated by the ArtsConnect collaboration with Barry YMCA, and funded by the Arts Council of Wales, aims to help young people aged 16 – 25 to gain experience in music and media.

As part of the course, the ArtsConnect collaboration between local authority arts services in Bridgend county borough, Merthyr, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan is assembling a media team for the SONIG Youth Music Industry's Young Promoters Network (YPN) initiative, which supports young people to gain experience of putting on gigs and events for people their age.

Coun Lyn Morgan, cabinet member for

wellbeing, said: "The ArtsConnect collaboration has allowed our arts service to deliver some fantastic programmes in partnership with their colleagues in Merthyr, Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan county boroughs, and I'm sure this course will be no exception.

"The Young Promoters Network has a strong track record of giving young people opportunities to gain experience of working in the creative industries, and this series of workshops will give local youngsters a useful head start in the race towards obtaining a career in media."

The course will take place at The Hub (Barry YMCA) between 10.30am – 3pm from February 23 – 27. Transport will be provided for participants from Bridgend county borough.

Mad Hatter musical run scheduled for St Richard Gwyn

PUPILS in St Richard Gwyn High School, Barry, are putting on their latest school show – a musical version of Alice in Wonderland – next week over three nights, February 18, 19, and 20, at 7pm.

The musical, entitled Alice, has involved intensive rehearsals over a long period by pupils and staff. Tickets (£7 or £5) are available from the school on 01446 729250.

Did you know you can find The GEM on Facebook?
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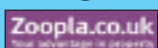
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Well presented throughout, mid terraced traditional, through living/dining room, fitted kitchen, ground floor shower room, three bedrooms, enclosed rear garden, no chain. ER-D.

£112,950**OLD MILL ROAD, BARRY**

Three bedrooms, elevated semi detached, living/dining room, fitted kitchen, minutes walk to train station, upvc dg - gch via combi.

£139,950**SOMERSET ROAD, BARRY**

Spacious living throughout, Edwardian semi detached, three reception rooms, replacement kitchen/breakfast, four bedrooms & additional attic/hobby area, sea views from rear, numerous basement rooms, enclosed rear garden, original features throughout. ER-D.

£224,950**BELL STREET, BARRY**

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£109,950**TRINITY STREET, BARRY**

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£121,950**BRAMBLE AVENUE, BARRY**

Two bedroomed, semi detached, ensuite shower to master, living room, kitchen/diner, driveway/ample parking, garden backing onto open space, ideal first time buy.

£124,950**ROMILLY ROAD, BARRY**

Mid terraced traditional, living/dining, kitchen/utility area, sitting room, stairs to attic/hobby area, velux window, outbuilding to rear, no chain. ER-E.

£240,000**OLD MILL ROAD, BARRY**

Elevated spacious traditional dwelling, through living room, kitchen, utility, downstairs shower room, 1st floor bathroom, three bedrooms. ER-D.

£149,950**PORT ROAD EAST, BARRY**

Versatile living, three reception rooms and study, four bedrooms, four bathrooms, kitchen/diner, utility room, garage/drive, set in approx 3rd acre. ER-E.

£389,950**THE MEWS, BARRY**

Modern end of terraced, driveway to front, living room, kitchen, gch via combi boiler, town centre location, no chain.

£94,950**ENFIELD DRIVE, BARRY**

Mid terraced traditional, well presented, living room, modern fitted kitchen, integrated appliances, two bedrooms, views over Vale, enclosed rear garden, designated parking.

£127,950**BROAD STREET, BARRY**

Mid terraced traditional, bay fronted, three reception rooms, kitchen, wc, three bedrooms, 1st floor bathroom & walk in shower room, enclosed rear garden, no chain. ER-D.

£149,000**PENCOEDTRE ROAD, BARRY**

Spacious living accommodation, three reception rooms, conservatory, wc cloakroom, four double bedrooms, master bathroom with jacuzzi, more than ample parking, placed in private cul de sac, enclosed rear garden. ER-D.

£259,950**CARN Y EBOL, BARRY**

Modern detached, three/four bedrooms, living room, dining room, converted garage, master with ensuite, wc cloakroom, low maintenance garden, driveway providing parking. ER-D.

£194,950**CORNWALL ROAD, BARRY**

Three bedrooms, semi detached, living room, dining room, sun lounge, fitted kitchen, utility area, situated off Barry Road, low maintenance garden. ER-D.

£129,950**LYDSTEP ROAD, BARRY**

Two bed modern, end of link, living room, kitchen/breakfast, parking, enclosed garden, no chain.

£90,000**SALISBURY ROAD, BARRY**

Mid terraced traditional dwelling, backing onto Porthorri, extremely well presented, two reception rooms, fitted kitchen, two double bedrooms, spacious bathroom. ER-E.

£139,950**HEOL BROADLANDS, BARRY**

Corner positioned, three bedrooms, modern detached, living room, kitchen/diner, enclosed garden, garage. ER-C.

£174,950**BENECROFTE, RHOOSE**

Three bedrooms, modern detached, well presented, wc cloak, living room, conservatory, modern fitted kitchen, sitting room (converted garage), ensuite shower room, enclosed rear garden. ER-D.

£206,950**ROMILLY PARK ROAD, BARRY**

Edwardian semi detached, four reception rooms, three storey, five bedrooms, far reaching sea views, utility/pantry/cloakroom to ground floor, family bathroom to first floor. ER-E.

£369,950**WOODLANDS ROAD, BARRY**

Well presented, mid terraced traditional, living room, sitting room, dining room, wc cloakroom, fitted kitchen, three bedrooms, family bathroom, no chain. ER-D.

£139,950**JENNER COURT, BARRY**

Private road leading to modern detached, two bedrooms, wc cloak, living/dining room, enclosed rear garden, ample driveway. ER-C.

£132,000**COLCOT ROAD, BARRY**

Corner positioned, bay fronted semi detached, two double bedrooms, living room, fitted kitchen, wc cloakroom, garage/driveway, no chain. ER-C.

£124,950**VALE STREET, BARRY**

Corner positioned, well presented, mid terraced traditional, two reception rooms, fitted kitchen, two bedrooms, enclosed rear garden. ER-E.

£114,950**GLAN Y MOR, BARRY**

Top floor (5th Flr) apartment, separate private balcony, two bedrooms (master ensuite), far reaching views over water, lift, designated parking place, no chain. ER-C.

£124,950**COURT ROAD, BARRY**

Traditional mid terraced, spacious living, two reception rooms, four bedrooms, no chain, in need of some updating, walking distance to Town Centre. ER-E.

£99,950**TITHE BARN, RHOOSE**

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Immaculate presentation, semi detached, three storey, modern replacement kitchen, four bedrooms, two ensuite bathrooms & dressing room, garage/driveway. ER-C.

£209,950**ST NICHOLAS ROAD, BARRY**

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PHOENIX DEFY THE HAILSTONES FOR A FINE WIN OVER WATTSTOWN

ON a wet and miserable weekend for Welsh rugby, there was still action at Pencoed RFC.

While most players and fans had to watch Wales come unstuck in Dublin, two games were played over the weekend.

The men's team put together a charity side to take on local company Biomet in a game staged to raise funds for Heronsbridge School, and they won by 26-15.

Also, the Pencoed Phoenix under-16s took on Wattstown and recorded a 15-11 victory.

The girls had to contend with a hailstorm, but both sides competed fiercely, particularly as referee Simon Harrison decided to go with contested scrums.

Forwards who stood out for Phoenix with their work-rate and tackling were Ceryn Williams, Caitlin Jones, Ella Roberts, Carys Baker and Hannah Pound.

There was a try for Wattstown by Molly Philpott, but Phoenix replied with two tries after breaks by Phoenix captain Amy Morgan and Kayleigh Powell, who were jointly voted 'lady of match'.

Next for Phoenix are Garndiffaith away on February 16. All are welcome to join this young team. Contact head coach Leanne Casley on 07921 312897 or visit Pencoed Phoenix under-16s' page on Facebook.

All pictures by Julie Hancock of Pencoed RFC at juliehancock.org



ABOVE: Shania Brooker hangs on to a Wattstown runner.



BELOW: Chloe Parrish looks to break a tackle.



ABOVE: The Biomet side who played a Pencoed XV to raise funds for Heronsbridge School.

LEFT: Action from the charity match.

Scorpions' former players in return

SOUTH Wales Scorpions have brought four former players back to the club for the 2014 season.

The Scorpions, who kick off at their new home of Maesteg RFC when they take on Oldham Roughyeds on Sunday, March 2, say that all four players approached the club for a possible return after time away.

Barrie Phillips from Cardiff played 19 games in Scorpions' first season in 2010 before playing just one Challenge Cup game the year after.

Since then he has played for the Scorpions' feeder sides Valley Cougars and South Wales Hornets before making appearances for Cardiff Demons last year.

Shaun Owens from Bridgend played for the Scorpions in 2010 and 2012 when he made 23 appearances. He spent much of the 2013 out of the game with an injury and played some local rugby union before returning to the club for the 2014 season.

Alan Pope made just two appearances for the Scorpions in 2010 and starred for feeder side Valley Cougars in 2011 which earned him a recall to the Scorpions in 2012 when he played 13 times. He has since been turning out for his local rugby union side, Waunarlwydd RUFC.

Finally, former Celtic Crusaders first team player Chris Vitalini played 23 times for the Scorpions throughout 2012 and in the first half of the 2013 season. The Italian international left the club last May to join local rivals Gloucestershire All Stars and after failing to reach a deal with them in

2013, has come back to south Wales.

Scorpions coach Mike Grady has spoken highly of all four players.

He said: "I'm pleased Barrie has agreed to return to the club. As soon I got the job he was one of the first names on my list."

"His experience and style of play will be much needed for the 2014 season, while his attitude and application towards training so far has been faultless. I'm looking forward to working with him this season."

"Shaun is again another on top of the list when I came in. I had a number of glowing reports about him which he has backed up in training so far. He has a big future in the game, will be an exciting player for us this season and he will form a lethal half-back partnership with Paul Emanuelli."

"I'm delighted Alan has rejoined the club as I worked really closely with him with Wales Dragonhearts during the Four Nations. He showed his quality then and he was immense for Wales Select against the full Wales World Cup Squad."

"Chris is a player whose experience is going to be vital for myself and the club this season. He has proven already in training that he is a leader and I'm looking to him to have a big year for the club."

South Wales Scorpions season tickets start at just £5 for juniors and go up to £70 for adults, and can be bought by going to www.scorpionsrl.com. Match tickets for their first game of the season when they entertain Oldham Roughyeds on Sunday, March 2, can also be bought.

IAN GOLDEN

Deadline looms for local athletes' funding application

THE deadline is fast approaching for athletes to apply to become members of the Halo Sport Foundation, which is being run by Halo Leisure and Bridgend County Borough Council.

Run in conjunction with the national GLL Sport Foundation, the scheme provides thousands of pounds worth of funding for sportsmen and women in the county borough, and also entitles them to train for free at local leisure centres, which are managed by Halo Leisure in partnership with Bridgend County Borough Council.

Coun Lyn Morgan, cabinet member for well-being at BCBC, said: "The Sport Foundation is about us working together to create a lasting legacy of London 2012 in our community. Bridgend county borough has a strong history of producing athletes who have competed in the Olympics, Paralympics and Commonwealth Games, and this scheme will help to support others on their road to sporting glory."

In addition to free use of leisure facilities to help with training needs, athletes who are competing at a national level can apply for an annual financial award of up to £1,250 based on rankings and nomination from a Sports Governing Body.

Halo's Community Partnership Manager, Paul Whapham, said: "Many of the country's most talented sports people struggle to meet the rising costs of competition. The Foundation assists local talented athletes towards achieving their full potential by helping to reduce some of the financial burden of sporting costs."

Bridgend county borough.

Among those who are already members of the scheme are established performers such as triathlete Helen Jenkins, Welsh netball squad member Sioned Hiscocks and budding stars including 15-year-old Cameron Davies from Bridgend, who has represented Great Britain at Tae Kwon Do.

Coun Lyn Morgan, cabinet member for well-being at BCBC, said: "The Sport Foundation is about us working together to create a lasting legacy of London 2012 in our community. Bridgend county borough has a strong history of producing athletes who have competed in the Olympics, Paralympics and Commonwealth Games, and this scheme will help to support others on their road to sporting glory."

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tionals?

4. Which chemical element has the symbol Ir and the atomic number 77 and is the most corrosive-resistant element known?

A Rudge

Answers:
1. Chile
2. Catherine Howard
3. Alice Stewart
4. Iridium

NO CHANGE AT TOP OF BRIDGEND QUIZ LEAGUE

IN Division One matches on Monday, February 3, there were no upsets.

Llangewydd Arms consolidated top position with a 53-47 win at Crown Inn A, who stay joint second with Swan Nomads, as Swan had a bye, leaving both on 14 points.

The other two games in the division had close results, Oldcastle A winning 38-36 against Laleston Inn A, and Tyrrisha Royals having a 41-40 win versus

Mackworth Arms.

In the second division, Crown Inn B had a bye but stayed top with 19 points, four clear of Cabo Roche, who won 54-50 at Pyle RFC.

A point further behind are the two Pheasant teams who both won well, Gamekeepers by 55 to 49 at Coychurch Wanderers and Poachers, who were at home to Bush Kangaroos, winning 50-38.

Next, we have a four-point gap to three teams on 10 points. Coychurch, Laleston Inn B and Oldcastle B, who drew

56-56. The bottom two in the table are Pyle and the Kangaroos.

Here are your four specials:

1. If you sailed due east from Sydney in Australia and Christchurch in New Zealand, your first landfall would be in which country?

2. Which of the wives of Henry VIII was known as the 'rose without a thorn', and was beheaded because of her alleged adultery?

3. Who was the first English cricketer to play in 150 one-day internationals?

tionals?

4. Which chemical element has the symbol Ir and the atomic number 77 and is the most corrosive-resistant element known?

A Rudge

Answers:
1. Chile
2. Catherine Howard
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Bridgend College in Marches draw

THE draw for the annual Marches 7s Rugby Tournament is now complete and saw Bridgend College drawn in group D, where they will face strong competition from Adam's Grammar School, Kings Worcester and Gower College, if they are to progress in the cup competition.

A spokesman said: "The largest and longest running school-run rugby 7s competition is stronger than ever this year and sees 32 school teams from across the nation competing to find one champion."

The Marches 7s, hosted by Hereford Cathedral School at Wyndesore (HR4 0PH), takes place on Sunday, March 2, from 10.20am to 5.30pm. Admission is free of charge and all are welcome to attend.

WHAT'S ON - in brief

AGM

PENCOED Town and District Twinning Association will hold a public meeting followed by the AGM on Wednesday, February 26 at 7.30pm in the Welfare Hall, Pencoed.

Further information from Wendy McDonald, secretary (01656 865633), email eric.mcdonald012@btinternet.com.

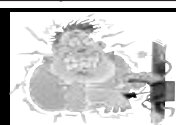
Charity book signing

BRIDGEND author, Thea Hartley, who has just had a novel published, *No Refuge*, about domestic abuse set in the Welsh Valleys, will perform a book signing on March 3, when Bridgend Lions hold a charity book fair in the YMCA, Bridgend from 10.30am-1.30pm, with the profits going to the charity.



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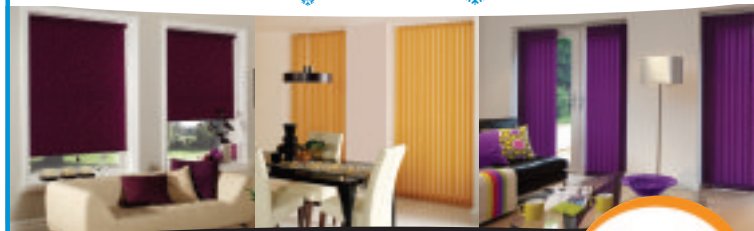
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Family Notices

PARRY May

Peacefully, fell asleep on the 1st February at the Princess of Wales, May of Llantwit Major. Reunited with Des (Matthews). Dearly loved mother of Margaret and Vance and daughter-in-law Carol, she was a loving grandmother and great grandmother, and a much loved sister and will be sadly missed.

Funeral service on Monday, 17th February 2014 in St. Illtud's Church, Llantwit Major at 2.00pm, followed by cremation at Coychurch Crematorium at 3.15pm. All enquiries to W.A. Brown & Son 01446 792489.

LAMB Anne

On January 29 at UHW, Cardiff, suddenly, but peacefully, in the presence of her family, Nancy of Rhose. Loving wife of her late husband Jock, dearly loved mum, cherished nan and grandma.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fommon. Funeral Monday, February 17, service 11.30am at Penmark Church, followed by cremation at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry at 12.45pm. Flowers may be sent to the Funeral Home.

CLEAVE Emma Elizabeth (Betty)

Peacefully on 4 February at Springbank nursing home Barry. Emma Elizabeth (Betty) aged 90 years formally of Somerset Road West, Barry. Mayor of Barry 1996-1997, beloved wife of the late Harry. Beloved mother, grandmother and great grandmother. Betty will be sadly missed by all her family and friends in Wales, Australia and England.

Resting at A.G. Adams & Son Funeral Home, Gladstone Road, Barry, where flowers may be sent until the funeral on Thursday 20 February. Service in the chapel at 11.30am, afterwards interment at Barry cemetery.

POWELL Margaret Ann

Passed away peacefully on the 3rd February in the Princess of Wales Hospital, Peggy of Llanblethian. Wife of the late Eric and dearly loved mother of Roger.

Resting at W.A. Brown & Son, College Street, Llantwit Major until the funeral service in St John the Baptist Church Llanblethian on Tuesday, 18th February at 12.30pm, followed by cremation at Coychurch at 1.45pm. Donations may be made to Parkinsons Disease Society or Red Cross c/o the Funeral Director (cheques only please).

NORTHWAY William Job (Bill)

Passed away on 4th February 2014 on his 81st birthday at the Princess of Wales Hospital. Darling husband of Eunice, adored father of Jane, Esther and Caroline and father-in-law of Tosh, Mike and Tiernan. Much loved grandfather of Rachel, Rob, Cath, Kat, Dave, Samantha, James, Kieran and Cerys. Loving great grandpa of Harrison. Dear brother of Margaret and the late Samuel and Percy. Sadly missed by all.

Funeral Service on Tuesday, 18th February at Holy Cross Church, Cowbridge at 12 noon, followed by committal at Coychurch Crematorium at 1.15pm. Family flowers only please.

PALMER Janice Sarah

Janice, wife of the late Frank Palmer, mother of Gillian and Stephen, died peacefully after a brief illness on February 2nd, 2014, aged 77 years.

Funeral Service at United Free Church, Westgate, Cowbridge on Friday, February 14th at 3.30pm. Flowers may be sent to Thomas Brothers, Greengate, Ewenny Road, St Brides Major, CF32 0SB.

TURNER Jeffrey

Peacefully on Friday, 7th February at College Fields Nursing Home, Barry. Jeff of Rhose Road, Rhose. Beloved husband of Doreen and brother to Eira, loving father of Lynne and Robert, daughter-in-law Eve and partner Richard. Much loved grandfather and great grandfather.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons Fommon. Funeral Wednesday, 19th February, Service and Cremation at 2.15pm at Cardiff and Glamorgan Crematorium followed by Service at 3.15pm at St Peter's Church Rhose. No flowers by request, donations if desired to E.N.T. Endowment Fund 9240 UHW, c/o J James, 11 Fommon Road, Rhose, CF62 3DZ.

BAKER Margaret Megan

Peacefully on 4 February at University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff, Margaret of Barry.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons Fommon. Funeral Friday, 14 February, Service and Cremation 12 noon at Cardiff and Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry. Family flowers only, donations in lieu if desired to Breast Cancer Care Cymru, c/o J James, 11 Fommon Road, Rhose, CF62 3DZ.

QUINN

It is with sadness we announce the death of Raymond Anthony Quinn, aged 83 years, who died peacefully at the Royal Derby Hospital with close family in attendance. Raymond was a much loved husband, father and grandfather. He will be sadly missed.

The funeral will be held at St Cadoc's Roman Catholic Church, Cowbridge on Friday, 21st February at 12 noon. Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to Cancer Research UK, c/o Thomas Brothers, Greengate, Ewenny Road, St Brides Major, CF32 0SB.

Thomas Lynette (nee Bassett)

Beloved wife of the late Gwelfor Thomas, a much loved mother of Peter & Huw and daughters in laws, Sharon & Olwen, step grandma to Rhys & Sinead, Gareth (Hifoni) and step great grandma to Niamh. A dear sister to Peter Denny & Gill & the late Lincoln Bassett. Lynette will be greatly missed by all her family and friends.

Funeral Service to be held at Cardiff and Vale Crematorium, Port Road, Barry on Monday 17th February at 2.15pm. Resting at Park Independent Funeral Directors, 7 Tynewydd Road, Barry. 01446 421212.

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Anniversaries



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LICENSING ACT 2003 Section 84

Notice of application to vary a club premises certificate. Notice is given that an application has been made to Bridgend County Borough Council (the Licensing Authority) for a VARIATION TO THE CLUB PREMISES CERTIFICATE in respect of the club premises shown below.

Details of the application may be inspected between the hours of: Monday to Thursday 0830 to 1700 hours and Friday 0830 to 1630 hours at Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB or by visiting the authority's website: www.bridgend.gov.uk.

Any responsible authority or any other person may make representations in respect of the application, which must be submitted, in writing, to the following address before the date shown below: Licensing Section, Bridgend County Borough Council, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB.

Name of applicant: Maesteg Cricket Club. Name and Postal Address of the Club Premises: North Lane, Queen Street, Maesteg, CF34 9YN.

Details of the proposed variation: To extend opening hours to 02.30 hrs. To extend supply of alcohol to 02.00 hrs. To extend live music hours to 24.00 hrs. To extend recorded music hours to 01.30 hrs. Date by which representations must be made: 25.2.2014.

This notice remains in force from and including the day after the giving of this notice to the licensing authority, namely 27.1.2014, for 28 consecutive days.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. The maximum fine on summary conviction is £5,000.

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News in and out of class at Ysgol Gyfun Bro Morgannwg

University success

Congratulations to year-13 pupil Elis Jackson from Penarth, who has been accepted to study Engineering at Homerton College, Cambridge. We wish him every success in the future.

Swimming champs

THERE was a good day of competition at Cardiff International pool on January 26.

Not many were competing from YGBM, but the results were very good. Well done to Ellie Peterson (individual medley year-7 and 8 girls), Kory Russell (boys backstroke year-9 and 10) and Rhys James (freestyle and individual medley for boys year-7 and 8) on their efforts.

Results: Kory Russell – sixth in Wales in the boys back stroke year-9 and 10; Rhys James – first in Wales in the boys freestyle year-7 and 8 (the first Welsh swimming champion in the school's history!); Rhys James – second in Wales in the boys individual freestyle year-7 and 8.

Gymnastic competition CONGRATULATION S to the gymnastic team who competed in the County tumble and vault competition at Sophia Gardens on January 24.

Boys under-19: first, Iwan Mephram; third,

Rhys Beynon; the team, first.

Girls under-19: second, Ffion Byrne; the team, first.

Rugby

tournament

ON December 20, the year-7 team took part in the Cardiff and Vale Welsh medium schools' rugby tournament against Glantaf, Plasmawr and Bro Edern at the Arms Park.

Unfortunately, we won only one game. The results are as follows: Bro Morgannwg 15 - Bro Edern 0; Bro Morgannwg 19 - Plasmawr 26; Bro Morgannwg 0 - Glantaf 5.

Congratulations to Mason Grady who was chosen as player of the tournament.

CRYF/ PTA bingo

A SUCCESSFUL bingo event arranged by CRYF was held at the school on January 26. Thank you to all who supported, funds raised will go towards purchasing iPads and setting up a new school library.

Stage Success CONGRATULATION S to Penarth pupil Jodi Bird (year-11) on her recent success in the Star of Stage competition.

Having got through the first two rounds, Jodi reached the final at the Sherman Theatre, Cardiff, where not only did she win her own age section, she was also announced as the overall winner of the competition.

Seaview Lads angling results

FISHING has been grim since the start of the year but anglers have persevered nonetheless, often turning out in numbers.

Rockling have made up many bags with odds 'n sods accounting for the balance.

Kevin Salah landed an excellent cod of 5lb 12oz to win one competition, but this was definitely an exception to the rule.

Nice to see some baby codling being caught but with the

amount of freshwater coming down channel we await our first pike!

It would be nice to think that things can only get better except February usually sees a downturn in sport!

Results (dates approx):

January 5: 1st K Salah 5lb 12oz; 2nd G Morgan 1lb 13oz; 3rd R Harding 1lb 4oz; 4th A Harris 1lb 2oz; 5th S Davies 1lb 1oz; 6th G Griffiths 1lb 0oz; M Bjegovic 1lb 0oz.

January 12: 1st M Langford whiting 2lb; 2nd R Green conger 1lb 11oz; 3rd P Coles whiting 1lb; 4th A Harris whiting 0lb 6oz.

January 19: 1st G Spitter 1lb 1oz dog; 2nd A Saif 0lb 2oz 5 beard slug; 2nd P Coles 0lb 2oz 5 beard slug 5 Blankers.

January 26: 1st m langford 0lb 11oz; R Green 0lb 6oz; 3rd A Harris 0.40oz; 4th P Coles 0.2oz.

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The year-7 rugby team.



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Elis Jackson.



Rhys James, swimming champion.

Indoor bowls season has ended at Sully

SULLY Indoor Bowling Club completed their league season with a 123-111 win over Taff Ely at Sully on Saturday, gaining 18 out of the 22 points available.

Sully won five of their 10 league games and were unlucky not to have managed a couple of more wins, losing two games after leading into the last couple of ends.

Saturday was slightly different, with Sully holding a comfortable 17-shot lead after 15 ends. Taff Ely then upped their game and started to reduce the deficit but Sully played solidly to win overall by 12 shots.

Once again, the rink skipped by Martin Clarke was backbone of the Sully team, winning by 16 shots, ably supported by Dave Curtis, Roy Richards and Graham Cogbill.

The rink of Brian Griffiths was another to perform well. With only one in the game after the 14th end, they picked up seven shots on the 15th end then went on to win by nine.

The other winning rinks were those of Dave Snelling and Mel Newman. Both started well and maintained their form, each winning by four shots.

Special mention must go to Des Bannister, who helped out at the last minute due to a late withdrawal and had a superb game at lead on Mel Newman's rink.

Overall, the league season proved difficult due to availability issues. On occasions, the club had barely enough names to put out a team. With more commitment from other club members, Sully would be able to select teams good enough to gain promotion. A big thanks must go to those who supported the stadium team throughout the season.

WIBA TRIPLES AND PAIRS COMPETITIONS. Sully Stadium will hold five rinks of triples on Thursday, February 20, at 6.30pm and on Sunday, February 23, the second and third rounds of the pairs will be held, starting with eight games at 10am, with the winners continuing at 2pm.

There are a number of internationals playing including Robert Weale and John Price. Food (and bar) available from 9.15am.

CRICKET IN BARRY

BARRY Athletic Cricket Club start pre-season nets on Sunday, February 23, at Colcot Sports Centre, Colcot Road, Barry, 12pm till 1pm.

All players, current, old and new are welcome. The club is also looking for match sponsors. Anyone interested should contact Mark Rees on 07570 135831 or e-mail markrees509@hotmail.com

Two narrow defeats for Penarth hockey teams

FACING teams close to them in their respective divisions of the Davis Wood Hockey League, Penarth Hockey Club's two sides both slipped to defeat at the weekend.

PENARTH 2 - 3 CARDIFF & MET C

After earning a good point away at Hereford last week, Penarth's 1st XI turned their attention to old rivals Cardiff & Met C on Saturday, looking to repeat the result of October's fixture.

Once again, weather conditions were less than favourable at Barry Sports Centre, and the home side, as has become a habit, started slowly. This time, the tardiness proved costly, as Cardiff grabbed two early goals.

Conceding the second goal seemed to shock Penarth into action, and the Vale's only senior men's club finally got their act together.

Their best phase of play came just before halftime and, having put the Cardiff defence under some concerted pressure, they were rewarded with a fantastic individual goal from Phil Lane, who drove in from the right-hand side of the D and slotted the ball in the bottom corner from his reverse side.

Penarth took that momentum into the second half and were now the better team. However, despite enjoying the greater possession, the Bears could not find a way past a stubborn Cardiff defence and, just as they appeared to be back in the game, they allowed the visitors to catch them with a counter-attack that led to a decisive third goal.

Desperate to salvage something from the game, Penarth pushed forward in greater numbers, eventually managing to get a goal back

through Sam Wooding, who tapped the ball home after it had bounced around the Cardiff 'D', but it was too little too late as precious points went begging.

The result leaves Penarth still holding onto fourth position in the De Cymru & The Marches One division, but now with their opponents having pulled level on points ahead of a tough few weeks for the Vale side.

GWENT A 3 - 1 PENARTH A

The second XI headed for Cwmbran on the back of a 6-2 thumping handed out to Neath the previous weekend, but knew a repeat would be tough against a better-placed side, and with a handful of players missing.

The weather decided to take a turn for the worse but squally showers did little to dampen a competitive match between the teams occupying fourth and fifth places in the De Cymru Two table.

Gwent had taken the return fixture by four goals to two, but the result had been distorted by two late strikes as Penarth chased victory.

Incredibly, however, a similar storyline played out second time around, as the home side went into an early lead courtesy of a shot from the edge of the D, but were then held by a resolute Penarth defence, anchored by the central pairing of Richard Bromiley and Zbig Sobierski.

Turning around just the one goal adrift provided the impetus for captain Rob Harrison's halftime speech but, despite renewed effort from the Vale side, it was Gwent who scored next, this time taking advantage of a penalty corner move that left the visitors' defence exposed to a shot into the far corner.

The goal was somewhat against the run of play as Penarth gradually enjoyed more possession and pressure, but chances on goal were lacking until a quick ball from the back was carried on by Tom Davies and Dave Watkins, with the latter driving to the bye-line before providing a cross that was converted from close range by Dave Thomas.

Sensing a comeback, Penarth decided to once again throw extra men forward, leaving a back three of Graeme Jones, Craig Llewellyn and Ian Smith to contain the Gwent threat.

Unable to produce an equaliser, however, the Vale side eventually came unstuck as a breakthrough overwhelmed the defence, leaving goalkeeper Calum Grant unable to deny the home side a game-ending third goal.

The defeat left Penarth's overall position unchanged, and the Vale side now has a week off to prepare for the trip to new league leaders Abergavenny.

The 1st XI, meanwhile, face a similar challenge this weekend, travelling to top of the table – and free-scoring – Lydney, looking to avenge a heavy home defeat earlier in the campaign.

Penarth Hockey Club welcomes new, old and returning players, umpires, supporters, friends and helpers, regardless of age and ability. Training takes place on the artificial turf at Barry Sport Centre every Wednesday, with the juniors in action between 6pm and 7pm and the seniors between 7pm and 8pm.

Further information can be obtained from club secretary Dave Stevens (d.stevens81@hotmail.co.uk)

CRAIG LLEWELLYN

VALE GIRLS CELEBRATE FUTSAL CUP SUCCESS

THE Vale Ladies & Girls Football Club were recently celebrating after one of their under 12 teams were crowned South Wales Girls League Futsal Cup Champions for 2014.

The Futsal Cup which took place over a 6 week period at indoor facilities across south Wales, saw 26 teams competing in regional divisions with the winners and runners-up of each area progressing to the finals event held at the House of Sport in Cardiff.

The Vale Athletic team comfortably won their regional group winning 15 and drawing 1 of their 16 group fixtures.

In the finals all the girls put in a great performance beating Troedryhiw, Porthcawl, Valleys Pontpridd and Villa Dino Christchurch before playing out a 1-1 draw with Cardiff City Ladies to claim the title.

The girls also created a bit of history as the first Cup winners for the club in just their second season of existence.



ABOVE:
Vale girls hold aloft the trophy.

Coach Luke Williams is hoping for more success for the club over the coming years.

"This is a great achievement and hopefully just the start for our club as we develop over the next five years. We have put excellent foundations in place within the grassroots section of our club with around

60 girls playing between the ages of 7-12."

The club trains on a weekly basis in the Barry area and are always welcoming new players on a regular basis. If you would like to get involved in girls football please email: valegirlsfc@gmail.com or visit the club website www.valegirlsfc.co.uk

Cottrell Park short-listed in golf awards

COTTRELL Park Golf Resort has been shortlisted for the national Golfer's Choice Golf Club of the Year awards.

The Golfer's Choice award scheme recognises the very best of UK golf clubs through votes and scores provided by club members.

From nominated UK-wide golf clubs, the St Nicholas club received votes and scores that has seen it achieve a top ten position in the category, 'best golf club for members'.

Gaynor Openshaw-Smith, sales and marketing director at Cottrell Park Golf Resort, said: "We were delighted to have been shortlisted for an industry award, but most importantly it has provided an insight into the level of customer satisfaction at the resort; it

seems that our members are pleased with the value, level of service, facilities and golf experience they receive with us - an excellent achievement for our whole team."

From ten finalists, the award winners will now be selected by a panel of industry judges.

A spokesman for the awards said: "We believe it's not just the quality of the course that makes a good golf club, it's a combination of customer service, facilities and value for money which all combine to give a great golfing experience to every player."

"Getting it right requires a lot of hard work from staff and management alike. Through the Golf Club Awards we'll find out which clubs are working the hardest, to provide a great golf experience."

NEWS FROM BARRY CHESS CLUB

Bosuns keep up title pressure

IT was a busy week for the Barry Chess Club, with three matches in the East Glamorgan Chess League and the third round of the club championship.

In a Swiss-style tournament, it takes a few rounds to sort out the stronger players from the rest. There were no real shocks but plenty of interesting games.

Peter Watkins and Chris Green are two players who should be somewhere in the middle of the pack so it was surprising that after two rounds they were the only players without any points at all.

So, when they played each other, perhaps caution was the watchword as they fought out a draw. Just above them was a clash between Martin Ricketts and new boy John Stephenson.

Before Christmas, John was beating everyone but since then he has found life much harder and has lost all of his games in 2014, so again it was no surprise to see Martin take the victory.

In the higher echelons, Lee Davis had a tough match against Dave Parsons. There were opportunities for Dave but eventually the victory went to Lee.

On the top board Ashley Davis had a very long game with Ken Hannah. For a long time it seemed that Ken would hold out for a draw but somehow Ashley found a winning move to allow him to queen a pawn for a winning advantage to maintain his 100 per cent record.

As we approach the fourth round, Ashley has three points to lead the table. The bowl is currently led by Ken Hannah with two points and the plate leader is Dave Mahoney with a win,

draw and a loss for 1.5.

The Barry Bosons and the Barry Gambits both travelled to take on teams from St John's College. The Barry teams were much stronger than their opponents so anticipated big wins.

The Bosons duly managed four wins with only Lee Davis slipping up, although he managed a draw against one of his bogey opponents, Robert Taylor to give the Bosons a 4.5 - 0.5 win. This result maintains their position as second in the division.

With the Cardiff Castles only picking up 3.5 points, the Bosons edge closer to the top spot and are now only two points behind the Castles.

Although the Camelots did not have a game this week they remain in seventh place just above the Cardiff Pawns who are still in the relegation zone. The Pawns picked up 3.5 points and trail the Camelots by only 1.5 points.

The Gambits also won easily with four victories. Windsor Lewis was the unlucky player to lose to a queen and bishop attack.

Jason Grice earned his second victory in his first season but his game was played at a blitz pace, winning in approximately

60 moves but only using 15 minutes.

In a similar time frame Dave Mahoney conjured a win but only took 10 moves. This victory moves the Gambits up to fourth place, but the Bridgend Central Express are only a point behind with a game in hand.

In the second division, the Quarks had a home game with Pentryrch A. Chris Green won a match with Will Harwood even though he was giving away 300 rating points.

Kevin Gandy and Peter Watkins both earned draws against opponents rated 200 points higher to leave the Quarks as losers, but only by a score of 3-2.

The Quarks remain in ninth place and are now only three points behind the Cardiff Crows and North Cardiff Cheetahs, but with a game in hand, so it is still all to play for.

The Barry Chess Club meets at 7:30 pm each Monday at the West End Club, St Nicholas Road, Barry. The club is open to players of all standards; whether you are interested in playing competitive chess or just the occasional friendly games.

For more details, visit <http://barrychessclub.yolasite.com>

Phil Jones

SPORTS NEWS FROM COWBRIDGE COMPREHENSIVE

BADMINTON TEAMS JUST MISS OUT ON TITLE TRIPLE

AFTER convincing wins in the regional tournaments, Cowbridge Comprehensive School had three teams out of the four representing the Vale in the South Central badminton competition.

The tournament was held at Cogan Leisure Centre in Penarth, and representing the junior girls were Kate Workman, Abby Johnson, Freya Johnson and Rhian Crossman, who faced tough opponents from Rumney, Lewis Girls and Cardiff High.

First up were Lewis Girls who, although full of energy, were no match for a well-drilled Cowbridge outfit.

Next were a spirited Cardiff High team, who despite only fielding a team of three players, acquitted themselves well to the challenge. Good wins from all four girls saw a comprehen-

sive win for Cowbridge and a winner takes all match, versus Rumney.

Kate Workman and Freya Johnson won their singles games comfortably, ensuring a 2-0 lead going into the doubles.

The next two matches saw extremely close games but the quality of Cowbridge's team saw them run out 4-1 winners, lifting the trophy and crowning them South Central Welsh Champions.

The junior boys came into the competition full of confidence during an outstanding display during the regional competition.

Evan Thomas, Harry Donnithorne, Michael Cox and Will Stewart started their competition against a resilient Cardiff High team with a couple of outstanding players of their own.

Evan, Michael and Harry all won their matches and a com-

fortable 4-1 victory was achieved. Next were St John's, who again had talent within their ranks.

However, at this level talent alone isn't enough. Sheer guts, determination and a pinch of class was needed to achieve another 4-1 win.

St Cenydd were next, and they were suffering after being humbled in their two previous matches. Cowbridge were in no mood for sympathy, as they piled on even more misery with a 5-0 win.

Last and not least was the team from Ebbw Vale. Victory in this game would secure the title and this was achieved comfortably with another 5-0 win.

An outstanding performance from a very talented group of players who will go on to represent the school for years to come.

Finally, the Key Stage 4

team of Sam Stewart, Matthew Reynolds, Finn Murphy and Josh Evans stepped up to try and retain the trophy they won last year.

First up were Bishop of Llandaff who have been stiff competition at this stage in previous years. The boys from Cowbridge produced a resolute display to come out 3-2 winners in their first fixture.

Next were the team from Rumney, who had a couple of very talented players in their ranks. Matthew and Sam won both their singles fixtures and this set up a convincing 4-1 win overall.

The last opponents were Y Pant, who could be considered as local rivals. This was a winner takes all match which escaped the team from Cowbridge, who came up against better opposition on the day, second place was an excellent achievement nonetheless.

Cavaliers' junior coaching sessions

OUR junior programmes run from Sunday, February 9 until Sunday, April 13 from 12am to 2pm at Llantwit Major Leisure Centre.

The under 9s and 11s are from from 12pm to 1pm.

The under 13s and 15s will run from 1pm to 2pm.

Is your child interested in trying cricket? The sport is like no other in developing social and life skills.

We are offering crick-

et taster sessions with top qualified coaches.

The indoor sessions cost £2 a session and are open to all youth players at the under 9, 11, 13 and 15 age groups - so essentially ages from seven to 15..

Equipment will be provided and we will be using both cricket and soft balls and using the net facilities, the sessions will be run by England and Wales cricket board (ECB) accredited coaches.

Dave Cheal

RAIN DOESN'T STOP PLAY AT SOUTHERNDOWN!

DESPITE the recent heavy rainfall, Southerndown golf course has not been closed, even for a day.

Elsewhere, golfers complain that their courses are unplayable in winter; their shoes get muddy, they can't use buggies or trolleys, they get frustrated by course closures and even when their courses are open, they have to play on winter tees and greens.

Southerndown members are lucky enough to be able to play all year round in near-perfect conditions, thanks to the unique features of this area of the Vale of Glamorgan. And,

of course, they have spectacular views to enjoy, too!

2014 promises to be a great year in the history of this famous club, with two major golfing events, in addition to the annual Duncan Putter. In July a Senior Open Qualifier is being staged at Southerndown, and then in August the club plays host to the top amateur golfers of the UK as the four nations compete in the Home Internationals. A year to remember!

In the meantime, you can book a 4-ball at Southerndown for £100 in February (quote C2M-Gem) to see whether Second Club membership is for you. Call 01656 880476.

Sully Bridge Club results

Sully Bridge Club Results for Wednesday, February 5:

North / South: First Peter Milar/Trish Tracy, 61.28; second Moira Currie/Hilary Laurence, 61.20; third Ev Kerslake/Vernon Pearne, 61.03.

East / West: First Bill Leyburn/Lynne Leyburn 55.17; second Peter Craig/Hazel Craig 54.39; third Judy Collins/Janet Cunningham 54.02.

Saturday February 8:

North/South: First Trish Tracy/Peter Millar 61.90; second Alan Jones/Carolyn Matthews 57.74; third Anne Mahoney/Dave Mahoney 57.44.

East / West: First Pam Sherman/Pat Verdon 63.99; second Hazel Craig/Peter Craig 57.14; third Helen Davies / Belinda Davies 52.08

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Compact convertible suits the British weather

THE Citroen DS3 Cabrio is the only convertible in its class to accommodate five passengers and to be equipped with a 245-litre boot and split folding rear seat.

That boot initially looks tiddly but after the lid is lifted it is large enough for a standard pushchair (with the rear wheels removed), which I must say surprises me.

As I sit inside the top-of-the-range 155bhp model I recall testing a Lexus IS250C luxury convertible. I was at the traffic lights when the sun decided to come out and I pressed the button for the roof to go down.

Almost instantaneously, the lights went to green and I had to get moving. As soon as the car moved, the roof stopped going down and so I was driving with it half up and with part of the boot lid still open.

I pulled over as soon as it was safe to do so. A ridiculous situation to be in, and unsafe.

Thank goodness there is finally a convertible that is well suited to the British weather and to impatient motorists like me. Because the roof does not fold back into the boot but above the rear window, it makes it more practical all round, which is why the roof can be operated at speeds of up to 75mph.

By Tim Saunders

The DS3's high quality canvas roof complements the bodywork and to the unknowing, it appears to be simply a hot hatch but we know otherwise. On first acquaintance the vehicle looks just like the DS3 coupe.

My test takes place in the middle of winter with lashing rain and, much to my wife's distaste, I have to experience driving with the roof down.

Controlled by a button on the overhead console, the hood opens and closes in just 16 seconds flat, which is just as well, because when the weather gets too unbearable that roof just has to go up.

It's just as well that it is fitted with a hardwearing interior that features leather seats and much plastic, which copes with excess rainwater well. But the great thing is that with the air conditioning turned up to maximum heat, you can enjoy all the benefits of open top driving with the advantage of a hot climate.

When the DS3 Cabrio's roof is open an aerodynamic front deflector reduces wind noise and deflects air currents to prevent buffeting.

The sophisticated Infinite Blue roof material is in blue and violet, created by a weave of three different coloured threads. One of these is shiny, with each thread reacting differently to changes in



The Citroen DS3 Cabrio.

light conditions.

Inside, the two-door DS3 Cabrio is a distinctive and sophisticated cabin which includes all-new upholstery choices, including Granite Blue leather, while there is white LED ambient lighting around the ceiling console and white lights in the instrument cluster.

The trouble is that although it is marketed as a five seater, with the best will in the world it doesn't fit five adults in comfort. Even with our two child seats in the back, it is necessary for the front seats to be pushed forward, uncomfortably so for

the driver, making it fine for short distances but not longer.

The ideal scenario is for three little scamps in the back and then the adults in the front have a reasonable amount of legroom.

The DS3 Cabrio's dashboard, air vent surround and gear knob are also colour coded to the body colour and soft top.

At just 3.95m long the DS3 Cabrio is compact enough to get into tight parking spaces, which is extremely important where I live because the council has taken it upon itself to put double yellow lines almost everywhere.

Externally, the DS3 Cabrio has eye-catching rear lights incorporating a chrome-finished DS logo, 17-inch alloys and a double chrome exhaust further adding to its cool sporting appeal.

It's a gutsy, fun car to drive with plenty of power, if required. As with all convertibles it makes a great second car.

Facts at a glance:

DSport THP 1.6-litre 155 6-speed manual

Price: £22,100

Top speed: 132mph

0-60mph: 8.2secs

Economy: 47.9mpg

Watch the video at www.testdrives.biz.

ON AND OFF THE TURF with Brian Lee

DIAMOND IS FOR EVAN

LIKE A Diamond, a four-year-old bay gelding trained by Llancarfan's Evan Williams, landed the principal race – the Coral APP Download From The App Store Handicap – at Wolverhampton last Friday evening.

Ridden by T P Queally, the 3-1 chance scored by three parts of a length from the favourite *Sagesse* to claim the £5,175 first prize.

Evan, a former national champion point-to-point rider, is really known as a jumps trainer, but he has saddled a number of flat race winners in the past.

In his popular Saturday Daily Mirror racing column, Evan said of the Ireland v Wales rugby international: "I'm putting my money on the Red Dragons at a shade of odds against. I think this one will be very tight."

Evan, please keep your tips to the horses. You're much better at it!

NELLIE'S ELEGANT WIN

NELLIE The Elegant, a three-year-old bay filly trained at Aberthaw by Tim Vaughan and racing in public for the first time took the 32 Red.Com Maiden Fillies' Stakes at Wolverhampton on Saturday evening.

Partnered by Bargoed's David Probert, the 16-1 outsider kept on gamely in the final furlong to beat the well fancied Rose Kazan by half-a-length.

RHOOSE BOY TO COMPETE IN EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

ASTON CURNICK of Rhose JSTKD has been sponsored to compete at the European Championships in Switzerland in April.

Ashton, who competes under the instruction of Joseph Schembri, has been selected by the Welsh squad to represent the junior color belt team.

Watts Coaches of Cowbridge has donated funds so that Ashton can travel and represent his club and country.

Ashton and JSTKD would like to thank Watts for the support and all at the club wish



Ashton Curnick of Rhose.

Ashton luck on his journey to Switzerland.

For more information on Tae Kwon Do in the Vale telephone 07711 234 500 or visit jstkd.co.uk.

LLANTWIT UNDER-13S TURN ON THE STYLE AT THE ARMS PARK

LMRFC U13s put on a spectacular show at the Cardiff Arms Park.

Llantwit Major RFC U13s traveled to the Cardiff Arms Park last Sunday on a wet and windy day. Llantwit knew before the game they would be up against it having lost to Clwb Rygbi last year.

The boys embraced the professional setup by using the Blues' changing rooms and also running out the tunnel for their warm up before the game.

The game started with Llantwit playing into the wind first half but straight from the whistle the Major started the game with a bang.

A superb catch from the kick off by captain Beiber Hodge saw Llantwit build and control the game playing the ball tight and driving it up with their forwards. A series of 'pick and go's' saw Llantwit on the Clwb's 22m line and a final push from the pack mauled the ball over the line. Second row Connor Treadgold was the man in possession of the ball.

With the wind firmly in the sails of Llantwit it wasn't long before Llantwit put more points on the scoreboard this time coming from fullback Iwan Robinson-Booth whose blistering pace carved through a huge gap and crossed

the whitewash for another score.

Another try came for the Major. This time from outside centre Dylan Holloway who ran a beautiful line 20 metres out to cross for the third try of the game.

Llantwit then made the mistake of sitting back and a little change in the weather saw Llantwit's dominance slowly defuse and Clwb scored 2 tries in quick succession to make it 17-12. It looked like a fightback was on the cards and it wasn't long before the game broke up and Clwb scored their third try of the game to take it to 17-15 with 5 minutes left before the interval.

The half time score finished at 17-15 to Clwb.

Treadgold barged his way over the line to score early in the second half.

Centre Holloway hoofed the ball 40 metres down field and with an incredible change of speed fullback Iwan Robinson-Booth chased the ball. Having the whole length of the field to make up and 6 Clwb players in between him and the bouncing ball he beat them all and with a silky bit of footwork he controlled it over the try line to score.

With the clock ticking Llantwit wanted to make this game their own and fly half Padmore tore the opposition backline to pieces.



ABOVE: Moment of pride – the under 13s at the Arms Park.

With the opposition unsure of Padmore's thinking they were all over the shop and it gave centres Fraser Prior and Morgan Jenkins a good platform to attack from and to make it harder for Clwb's defence.

Treadgold picked up a superb pop pass from the ground by flanker Callum McInnes to smash his way through the Clwb defence. With Connor's dad betting a tanner a try it got worse for him as Connor scored once more to take the score to 48-17 and his personal tally to 5.

A dominant performance and a

superb victory. The boys wished Padmore a happy birthday.

We train every Tuesday and Thursday. For more info contact me on 07557 128 861.

Squad: Dom Henson, Rhys Roberts, Tyler Chandler-Haines, Connor Treadgold, Brandon Hughes, Lewis Fryer, Mason Richardson, Callum McInnes, Joss Harris, Owen Hodge O, Ben Wilson, Liam Padmore, Morgan Jenkins, Dylan Holloway, Fraser Prior, Iwan Robinson-Booth, Luc Williams, Josh Dunn, Kyle Cates.

Kris Pilcher

LLANHARRY WIN TOP OF TABLE CLASH COWBRIDGE DARTS LEAGUE ROUND-UP

ON Tuesday, February 4, Llanharry came one step closer to becoming this year's league champions when they beat their nearest rivals Edmondes B 7-2.

However, the race for third spot is now wide open. The Hare and Hound moved up to third spot by defeating the Old Post Ladies 7-2, replacing the Cross Inn who lost 3-6 to the Edmondes A.

The Edmondes C slipped further down after losing 3-6 to the Farmers Arms. In the other match the Highwayman Inn also joined the race for third slot winning 7-2 against the Star Inn.

So the league standings are: Llanharry (96 points), Edmondes B (81), Hare and Hounds (57), Cross Inn (55), Edmondes C and Edmondes A (53), Farmers Arms and Highwayman Inn (49), Old Post Ladies (22), The Star Inn (16).

The next matches are on Tuesday, February 18, when there is a full programme of league matches. Edmondes B hosts the Hare and Hounds; the Farmers Arms hosts the Edmondes A; the Star Inn hosts Llanharry; the Edmondes C hosts the Highwayman Inn, while the Cross Inn hosts the Old Post Ladies.

The first matches start at 8.30pm and spectators are welcome.

So if a group of you is interested in forming a team

(six players minimum) and your local pub is willing to host you, get in touch and register your interest.

For further information e-mail Paul at cwbridgedarts@gmail.com, up-to-date information can be found on the website: www.darts.apns.co.uk. It is time to start thinking about next season! **PJT**

Junior cricket for Cowbridge

COWBRIDGE Cricket Club is organising winter net sessions at Cowbridge Comprehensive School, with coaching by fully qualified coaches.

Under-9s – eight weeks starting Thursday, February 13, 6.30pm to 7.30pm

Under-11s – Wednesdays, 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Under-13s and under-15s – Wednesdays, 8.30pm to 9.30pm

The club will be running junior teams (under-9, under-11, under-13 and under-15) in the Cardiff and The Vale League and the National Knockout Cup.

For further information, contact Sara Russell on 07806 483722 or visit www.cowbridgecricket.co.uk

Latest results in the Barry darts league

IN the Barry Darts League, BFC Allsorts maintained their place at the top of the league with a narrow 5-4 win away to the Wanderers.

Park Weasels overcame the Billy Ghosts 5-4, with Mike Blackmore hitting a 101 out shot. The Cwm Talwg also had a 5-4 win against the Plastics and the Poachers had a 7-2 victory over the Dartonians, with Ray Way hitting a 114 out.

In the first division, The Throws of Despair stretched their lead, at the top of the table, with a 8-1 win over the Starlets.

The Mariners 66 kept up the pressure with a 5-4 win over the Cambrian Runways, Ronnie Miles hit a 180 during the match. Pat's 26s beat the Caddy Cons Raiders 6-3.

RL

Bridge results

THE Latest results from Barrivale Bridge Club are as follows:

January 28, First, Mike Close and Denis Mottram (67.01 per cent); second, Kay Dyer and Mark Roderick (59.38); third, Mike Best and Peter Millar (57.99).

Bryn Gough and Dave Reed won on handicap. New members are always welcome at Barrivale. For more information, telephone 01446 418380, 01446 733425 or call at the Pioneer Hall, Beryl Road, Barry on Tuesdays at 7pm.



GEM sport



Wales and the Six Nations

Focus now turns to redemption against the French



ROUT IN THE DUBLIN RAIN... BUT DON'T WRITE OFF WELSH TEAM JUST YET!

"The Irish were superb and we were very disappointing", admitted Wales' New Zealand head coach, after watching his team comprehensively crushed in the wind and rain in Dublin by a fired-up Ireland side, led from the front by Paul O'Connell and Brian O'Driscoll, and finally undone by precision kicking from the home outside half.

...But the coach wasn't Warren Gatland...

The date was February 3, 2002, and it was his fellow countryman Graham Henry being interviewed, after seeing his Wales side (which included current assistant coaches Rob Howley and Robin McBride) humiliated by a record 54-10 defeat that saw the demoralised Kiwi vacating his post after just three and a half years and retreating Down Under to higher things!

While there is little danger of history repeating itself in 2014, Saturday's stunning 26-3 result, though not as traumatic as 12 years ago, was equally as emphatic – and the sense of *déjà vu* was palpable as a grim-faced Gatland faced the media afterwards.

"It was one of the worst performances since I have been involved with the team. We gave away 16 penalties, and were well beaten up front. Ireland certainly deserved to win," he said with typical honesty.

He went on to add ominously that while some Welsh players had not performed, the coaches, too, would have to take their share of the blame for what had turned into a full scale rout – with hopes of a record third successive championship seemingly in tatters.

The shattering reverse had been led once again by the big O's – O'Connell and

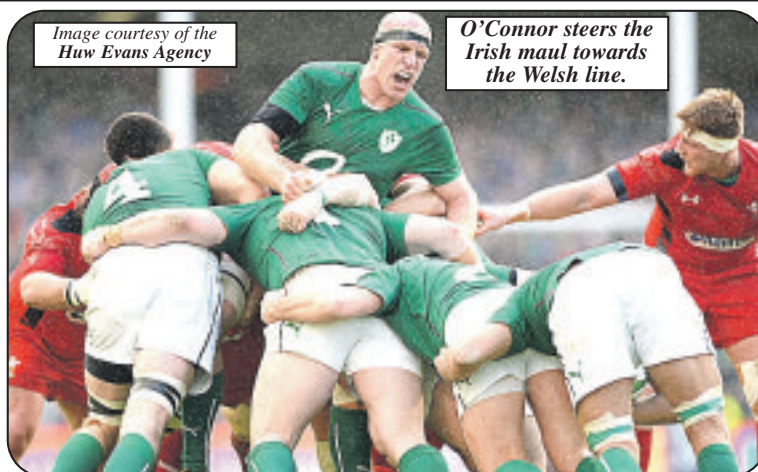


Image courtesy of the Huw Evans Agency

O'Connor steers the Irish maul towards the Welsh line.

BACK PAGE COMMENT

by Don John

O'Driscoll, while this time it was France-based Jonny Sexton turning the screw at No 10, not the Ulsterman David Humphries of 2002 vintage.

Sexton's ice-cool control and pinpoint accuracy stood in stark contrast to the flailing, error-ridden efforts of a young but experienced Welsh side containing a clutch of British Lions, whose indiscipline and frustration cost them dear the more the match wore on.

It also compared very unfavourably with the canny, controlled aggression of an Irish team that stuck to their deceptively simple but effective game plan, devised by Joe Schmidt (who on this occasion clearly won the back-room battle of the head coaches) to neutralise the Welsh power game by circumventing it.

Even so, the one-sided nature of the contest came as a major shock, with O'Connell himself saying: "I'm really surprised at the final result on the scoreboard".

Most commentators had predicted an evenly-matched, tight affair that could go either way, but were scathing in their response: Typical headlines were – "Humiliation for Welsh pack" – "Total domination!" – "No plan B!" they cried.

Be that as it may, it certainly looked that way for much of 80 torrid minutes that could never qualify as a rugby classic, and one where referee Wayne Barnes' over-active whistle had more than a passing influence on the outcome.

Old setpiece problems surfaced early with the first of two lost lineouts, and then an unfortunate injury to Welsh centre Scott Williams brought a hurried change in formation, with potent strike weapon George North having to move inside from the wing.

The coach again resisted the temptation to inject the vision and flair of unused replace-

ment James Hook into the backline – so we will never know if that would have made a difference, as the seriously malfunctioning side ran out of ideas and patience – to be immediately punished by two Sexton penalties.

(Tellingly, Wales conceded seven penalties in the first quarter alone).

With Welsh errors mounting apace, a powerful Irish lineout saw Chris Henry driven over for a try, converted by the clinical Sexton on the half hour, to take the score to 13-0.

A bleak first half ended with Wales having more problems at the setpiece and breakdown, conceding eight penalties, with nine missed tackles, and crucially losing the ball in contact – with consequent loss of cohesion and momentum.

Any hope that this could be regained after a welcome respite at halftime was lost when they were penalised yet again and Sexton made no mistake, to take the score to 16-0; and now the signs were really looking ominous for Wales, as they desperately began to chase a victory that had never really looked within their reach.

A promising attack was stillborn as they suffered yet another turnover, but finally earned a penalty of their own from referee Barnes, which Leigh Halfpenny slotted over for their only score of the match – but almost immediately danger was only narrowly averted when the normally reliable full back had a clearing kick

charged down. Minutes later, yet another Welsh infringement led to Sexton taking the score to 19-3. With 15 minutes left on the clock, replacement prop Rhodri Jones appeared to have plunged at grass height through a melee of bodies, but was adjudged to have crawled over the line on his knees.

The tale of woe was not yet over as the Irish eight again demonstrated their total dominance up front with a 20-metre driving maul, that ended with replacement back Paddy Jackson looping away unchallenged for try near the posts, which he casually converted, to make the score 26-3.

The game ended as it had begun, with Ireland seizing on opposition fumbles and pummeling away at the now battered defence.

The Welsh players were for once glad to hear referee Barnes' whistle to signal the end of a miserable ordeal whose long-term effects will clearly be a huge cause for concern as the 'inquest' into what exactly went wrong in Dublin continues back home.

Was it the fact that several key players had taken the field less than fully match fit after returning from injuries?

Has the prolonged off-field disarray involving the WRU and the four professional regions, and the latter's continuing lack of sustained success on the field, now had its inevitable spin-off in the national team's performance?

Was it all a crucial distraction in the build-up to a media-hyped Dublin encounter that Wales knew would test their players' focus and commitment to the utmost?

Who knows? At least now, though, the Welsh camp has time to take stock before the newly buoyant French come to town with a championship dream of their own.

Plenty of searching questions to be answered by the Welsh camp, yes, but it is far too early to conclude, as some critics have, on the basis of one bad defeat, that Wales have been "found out" at international level.

Or that Gatland's mantle has now been taken over by Ireland's Schmidt, on the strength of just one well-plotted victory.

Incredibly, it has even been suggested that the latter has leap-frogged Gatland as favourite to lead the next Lions' tour in 2017!

Of course, if the Kiwi can manufacture a home win over the French next week and get Wales' triple championship bid back on track, all will be just as quickly forgiven!

One thing is for sure, it would be foolish to conduct an autopsy on Welsh rugby just yet!

THE STORY SO FAR...

Wales and Ireland first squared up to each other (literally) on the rugby field 132 years ago – at Lansdowne Road, Dublin, on January 28, 1882, the Welsh winning that first Home Nations encounter by 2 goals, 2 tries to nil under the old Home Nations scoring system.

Before Saturday, these two arch Celtic rivals had locked horns 118 times, Wales notching up 65 victories to Ireland's 47, with six games drawn. Welsh teams had matched their opponents with 27 wins out of 58 in Ireland and four matches drawn – though this last outcome has rather spoilt that record! The total number of points to date – Wales 1,401, Ireland 1,304 – bears witness to the usually close-fought (in every sense of the word) nature of fierce clashes where there has never been a place for the timid!

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